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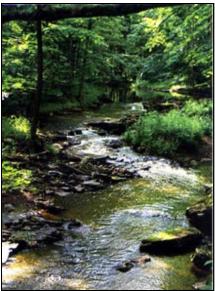




About The Report

The Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report is produced by the Region 3 External Affairs Office. The Report details accomplishments and activities of Region 3 from Oct. 1, 1999 to Sept. 30, 2000. Supporting accomplishments are submitted via the Region's Accomplishment Reporting System. The Report is designed to be published electronically, and can be viewed or downloaded in portable document format (.pdf) on the Region 3 Web site @ http://fws. midwest. gov Public requests for printed copies cannot be honored. Comments concerning content of the Report should be addressed to the editor at 612-713-5309 or by electronic mail at: scott flaherty@fws.gov.

About The Cover



--Photo by Scott Flaherty Little Otter Creek winds its way through Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge in southern Indiana. At more than 50,000 acres, Big Oaks was a significant addition to the National Wildlife Refuge System in 2000.

Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report

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Introduction

Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report Region 3



--Photo by Scott Flaherty Regional Director Bill Hartwig

From the Regional Director

This Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report highlights the outstanding work and accomplishments by dedicated members of the Great Lakes-Big Rivers Region, and our region's commitment to the resource and to the people who continue to enjoy the resource. Reports of individual station and program accomplishments contained in this report are at an all-time high, numbering more than 1,500 accomplishments. I welcome this opportunity to share these with you. Also, I want to thank everyone for your hard work, dedication and continued commitment to the mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The number and quality of our accomplishments is a source of pride and inspiration for continued achievements in our work with fish, wildlife and plant resources in the Midwest. Our successes are the result of cross-program, interagency efforts and through partnerships both in and outside of the Service. The cultivation and sustainment of our partnerships is a major component of our success in conserving natural resources in the Midwest. Field and regional office staff have documented accomplishments involving our work with more than 450 partners and cooperators -- from Fortune 500 corporations to small town kindergarten classes-- during the year. The value of partnerships to accomplishing our mission cannot be overstated. Accomplishments reported via the Region's Accomplishment Reporting System shows that during Fiscal Year 2000, our Region took part in on-the-ground accomplishments totaling more than \$150 million. The Service's financial contribution to these resource accomplishments amounted to just over \$16 million.

There were many notable achievements in 2000. We continued to take the management lead with two endangered species—the gray wolf and the American bald eagle—that are making their way off the Endangered Species List. We have worked with state, tribal and non-governmental groups to author the Service's proposal to reclassify the gray wolf from "endangered" to "threatened" in the lower 48 states. We also sought to designate critical habit for the Great Lakes' populations of the endangered piping plover. We worked to restore and protect habitat for other species such as the Karner blue butterfly, Eastern massasauga rattlesnake and Indiana bat.

Introduction

Summary of Fiscal Year 2000 Accomplishments



Regional Director Bill Hartwig (sunglasses), joins U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Jamie Rappaport Clark and Big Oaks Refuge Manager Lee Herzberger to discuss refuge with Indiana Congressman Baron Hill (back to

camera).

Removal of PCB-contaminated sediment from the Saginaw River in Michigan began in April, funded by a \$28.2 million Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) settlement with General Motors. Wildlife habitat also benefitted from other NRDA settlements with American Chemical Services, and the Gary Lagoons in Indiana. The settlement will also restore coastal wetlands and lake plain prairies around Saginaw Bay. The Region also received more than \$255,000 from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to help fund an experimental project to reintroduce migratory whooping cranes to the Eastern United States.

The National Wildlife Refuge System saw the addition of Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge, a 50,000-acre parcel of unfragmented forest, grassland and stream habitat that is being managed for 120 species of breeding birds, 41 species of fish and 46 species of rare plants. Volunteer support to our region's refuges is envied throughout the Service as demonstrated by the Friends of Rydell NWR Association, which was named 1999 Friends Group of the Year by the National Wildlife Refuge Association. Two groups, the Friends of the Upper Mississippi River Refuges and the Friends of the Cache River Watershed helped raise more than \$37,000 for restoration projects.

We can also count among our accomplishments the continued recovery of lake trout populations in the Great Lakes. Our lake trout and coaster brook trout restoration efforts are also being supported by our tribal partners. We are also working with our tribal partners to restore self-sustaining populations of lake sturgeon to Native American fisheries in northern Wisconsin and Minnesota.

This year also saw a major restructuring of the Service's management structure. Service-wide surveys of employees and managers initiated a return to Program management from Geographic area management. The restructuring created new opportunities for Region 3 with the creation of a new program area that merged Migratory Birds, formerly a part of Refuges, and Federal Aid. Our emphasis on the ecosystem approach to conservation was elevated with the creation of a new Special Assistant to the Regional Director for Ecosystems.

As we enter 2001, we are prepared for a new millennium of achievement. Working together as a team, engaged with our partners and our stakeholders, we have compiled an enviable record of achievement in our work to conserve our nation's precious natural resources. Our efforts in 2000, coupled with accomplishments of previous years, helped set new standards of excellence in fish and wildlife conservation. It is a pleasure to work with you. I congratulate you all for a job well done.



--Photo by Scott Flaherty

Conservation Partnership. The

Service partnered with commercial

and conservation interests to raise
more than \$785,000 to fund a prairie
wetlands conservation initiative.
Pictured from left Kelly Joe Weiner,
operations manager for Ron Schara
Enterprises; Regional Director Bill
Hartwig; Steve Jensen, Gander
Mountain marketing specialist and
Joe Duggan, public affairs director,
Pheasants Forever.

Introduction

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Midwest Natural Resources Group

Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report Region 3



Midwest Natural Resources Group

Description and Mission

The Midwest Natural Resources Group (MNRG) is a partnership effort to bring focus and excellence to federal activities in support of the health, vitality and sustainability of natural resources and the environment. The purpose of the Group is to develop processes, marshal resources among agencies and partners, seek opportunities for collaboration and communication, and provide timely assistance where it is needed. The agencies within the Group are committed to bringing results to the American public in communities of the Midwest.

In 1998 the Group was formally established. The agencies agreed on the need to attain proactive coordination, eliminate duplication and clearly establish the proper role for each federal bureau or agency within the 12 geographical area focus areas of the Big Rivers and the Great Lakes basins.

While many issues are dealt with on an inter-agency basis by agency staff, the MNRG is unique in that it is comprised of regional executives who have the authority to focus their agency's respective resources onto specific areas. For Region 3, the Group represents a source of multi-agency support and coordination for each of the Region's ecosystems. Ecosystem team leaders can use the Group to help build support for their team's goals.

The group consists of senior agency executives from 14 federal agencies with responsibility and authority throughout the Midwest. Approximately 200 natural resource professionals from these agencies also participate in the MNRG. Regional Director William Hartwig and 20 Service natural resource professionals are members of the MNRG. From May 1999 through June 2000 the Service was the lead agency and Mr. Hartwig was the MNRG Chair.

Description and Mission (continued)

The Group's membership includes regional executives of:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Department of Energy
- Federal Highway Administration
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- National Park Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service

- Office of Surface Mining
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Geological Survey

The mission of the Group is to provide an opportunity for federal agencies to:

- Coordinate, identify and enhance the accomplishments of existing efforts being undertaken by federal and non-federal partners.
- Explore and commit to, new opportunities for cooperation and collaboration.
- Achieve better reporting procedures to Congress and the public regarding federal progress and results within the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA).
- Better utilize limited resources ro reap maximum benefits for the natural resources and people of the Midwest.

Midwest Natural Resources Group

Summary of Fiscal Year 2000 Accomplishments

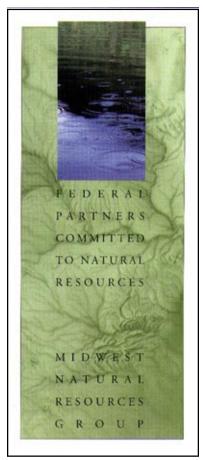
In order to facilitate its specific, on-the-ground, objectives, the Group decided to concentrate its efforts on 12 Midwest "focus areas," each of which fall within either the Great Lakes or Big Rivers basin. Focus areas within the Big Rivers basin are the Illinois River, Minnesota River, Missouri River, Ohio River, Ozark Plateau, and Upper Mississippi River. Focus areas within the Great Lakes basin are the Detroit River/St. Clair River, Fox River/Green Bay, Great Lakes (general), Saginaw River and Bay, Southern Lake Erie and Southern Lake Michigan.

During Fiscal Year 2000, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3, took over as the lead coordinating agency for the Midwest Natural Resources Group (MNRG). The Region 3 External Affairs office was in charge of coordination and communications for the approximately 200 natural resource professionals who participated in the Group throughout the Midwest. Service activities included establishing a multi-agency Communications Sub-Committee; developing, organizing and maintaining a contact database for MNRG members; and, coordinating and hosting November and June MNRG Meetings and organizing the February MNRG Meeting.

The External Affairs Office developed and disseminated the following products: MNRG Charter; Operations Guide; draft Focus Area Map; Tribal Contacts for the MNRG; Focus Area Executive Summaries (and three updates); four MNRG Meeting Reports; Contact List by Membership; Contact List in Alphabetical order; 12 Focus Area Fact Sheets; Charge for Focus Areas; and Agendas for the Focus Area, Communications Sub-Committee, and Senior Leaders meetings. Additionally, the External Affairs manages and provides technical assistance for the MNRG Accomplishment Reporting System and manages five MNRG Contributed Fund Accounts.

The Service, in coordination with other MNRG agencies, developed a MNRG Communications Plan, Logo, final MNRG and Focus Area Maps, Accomplishment Reporting System, MNRG Brochure, MNRG Website, and the ACE Award (Award for Conservation Excellence).

On June 14, 2000, Senior Leaders of the seven federal agencies represented by the MNRG signed an Intergovernmental Partnership Agreement to work in partnership with state and local governments, nongovernmental organizations, private landowners and individuals to restore and protect the ecological integrity of the Illinois River Basin. Specifically, the Group decided to focus initial efforts on the Crow Creek watershed of the MNRG Illinois River Focus Area. The Region 3 Office of External Affairs, in coordination with the MNRG Communication Sub-Committee, assisted the focus area with the Agreement, as well as coordinating a press conference and site tour, notifying local media, notifying the local congressional delegation and developing press packets.



Communicating Goals. The Group produced a full color brochure that described its mission, focus areas and lead agencies.

Midwest Natural Resources Group

Additionally, more than 100 staff members from the Group's member agencies met as a general group, as well as within the specific focus areas they participate in, to discuss issues and projects at a staff level. At the end of this meeting, each focus area reported their progress and discussed any issues they had with the senior agency leaders. This unique feature of the Group allows members from all agencies, executives and staff, to gain a clear and concise understanding of current issues and efforts within the Midwest.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001

The Midwest Natural Resources Group will advocate excellence in federal activities to support economic and natural resource vitality in the Midwest. The Group's key goals are:

- To report cooperative accomplishments in order to bring an understanding and awareness to the high economic, environmental and cultural value and needs of the Midwest.
- To focus on the fluid change and sustainability of natural resources, particularly in relation to continued economic development and urban growth.
- To garner federal focus and fiscal support toward the enhancement of these resources.
- To support demonstration projects in the Illinois River, Detroit River/St. Clair River, and Upper Mississippi River Watershed Focus Areas.
- To emphasize the Clean Water Action Plan's Focus on Healthy Wetlands.
- To focus on urban sprawl and the MNRG.

The Group aims to achieve its goals through ensuring that processes are developed, resources are identified and coordinated between agencies and partners, opportunities are sought for collaboration and communication, and timely assistance is provided, where needed, for the benefit of the American public in the metropolitan areas, communities, towns and farms of the Midwest.

Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report Region 3





Program Description and Mission

The Budget and Administration team is composed of the functional areas of Engineering and Safety, Personnel Management, Computer Support, Finance, Contracting and General Services, Diversity and Civil Rights, and Youth Training and Education (Mingo Job Corps).

The missions of the team's sub-components are:

Engineering and Safety: Provide quality and timely engineering services and maintain a motivated staff through training and use of up-to-date available technology. Provide proactive safety support for the Region, with timely guidance and oversight of Regional safety practices.

Personnel: Provide quality customer-focused consultant and technical services, in the areas of human resource management and development, that support the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service mission.

Computer Support Group: Provide quality customer service to Region 3 computer users by supporting and enhancing existing systems, and researching and planning transitions to new automated information systems and technologies.

Finance: Provide financial management services to field and Regional Office employees so they can understand financial implications while accomplishing the mission of the Service.

Contracting and General Services: Provide professional, high quality services to the Regional Office and field stations congruent with the mission of the Service, and contribute to its fulfillment through a motivated, well trained staff using up-to-date technologies and methods.

Diversity and Civil Rights: Provide technical and consultant assistance to Regional managers and supervisors in accomplishing their responsibilities in the areas of civil rights; recruitment, development and retention of a diverse workforce, accessibility; and promotion of a work environment that values and supports all employees.

Mingo Job Corps: Establish and maintain a safe, positive instructional environment which encourages the educational, vocational, and social growth and development of Mingo students and staff.

Summary of Fiscal Year 2000 Accomplishments

Engineering and Safety

The Division completed plans and specifications for 35 construction and maintenance projects with an estimated value of \$7.6 million. Division personnel participated on a national team to develop service wide design standards for bridges. Seismic assessments were completed on all moderate zone facilities. The Division of Engineering is continuing to improve customer service by conducting regular status meetings with Refuge and Fisheries personnel.

The Safety Division conducted a Regionwide survey to identify Regional safety needs and implemented an aggressive proactive Regional Safety Action Plan.

A web page was established for Safety, Occupational Health, and Environmental Compliance. The page is set up to assist Stations with safety and compliance information, generic plans, links to regulatory reference web pages, and information on training opportunities. The page provides timely dissemination of Safety information, and monthly safety topics.

Safety coordinated and conducted OSHA 600 Collateral Duty Safety Officer (CDSO) training, CPR classes, First Aid classes, and defensive driving classes for personnel from the Regional Office and Minnesota Valley NWR. Safety personnel assisted with the organization of three water craft safety training sessions, and the hosting of a national instructors training course for water craft safety. They coordinated and assisted with SMIS training presentation at AO/PL workshop.

Throughout the year Safety tracks, monitors and assists with station safety inspections, and accident reporting. Safety examined all Regional tort claims and assisted the Solicitor's Office on these cases.

Environmental Compliance coordinates the Regional compliance auditing program. The program reached the goal of completing the initial cycle of Regional audits. This includes formal and informal audits conducted on 120 organizational codes within the Region over the past five years.

Personnel

Employees of the Division worked on completing the Federal Employees Life Insurance Program open season by processing the changes which were effective in April. Marketed the use of Employee Express which allows employees the capability to make some personnel changes themselves. Provided information to employees on the proposed changes in Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) and administering TSP and Federal Employee Health Benefits open seasons. The FPPS T&A System was updated for changes in chain of command due to reorganization. Developed basic queries to assists tracking statistical information for the Region.

In the Employee Relations area, reviewed and commented on draft information that was distributed on CORE and worked toward encouraging interest among bargaining units in Region 3 in entering into a Memorandum of Understanding so the employees they represent could participate in CORE. Also participated in an all employee meeting to help employees understand the differences between the administrative grievance process, EEO complaint process and CORE. A new website covering Employee Relations was established that has guidance on the different types of employee discipline and performance-based actions with sample letters. Information on the Region's Work/Life Initiative was added to Region 3 Personnel's Website. New Work/Life Initiatives have been implemented for the employee transportation and fitness center subsidy.

The Division presented updates on various Division activities during the Administration/Project Leaders Workshop.

Personnel participated in customer service training and have identified specific areas where customer service can be enhanced. Projects have been identified to improve customer service and improve processes for enhanced customer service provided by this office.

Division employees updated the web guide on the Preparation of Standard Position Descriptions. New standard position descriptions and job analyses were added to the Region 3 Personnel Website for use by all Region 3 managers/project leaders.

As part of the Service's initiative to re-engineer internal and external hiring processes based on merit using state of the art technology, Region 3 Personnel Staff participated in a Service-wide demonstration using Quick Hire and provided an assessment of the system. In addition, the Service's Staffing Counterpart Group, of which Region 3 is an active participant, is leading the initiative to successfully implement the Quick Hire system to automate all of our recruiting and examining processes.

Personnel recommended to the Regional Management Team that the Student Temporary Experience Program (STEP) be the primary vehicle used by Project Leaders to fill temporary positions, except for the SLC Program. This past Fiscal Year 50 STEP students were hired, while only 9 new employees have been hired from other temporary activity.

Computer Support Group

Members of the Computer Support Group (CSG) worked very hard this year on several large, interrelated initiatives. The primary initiative to convert all Region 3 e-mail users from cc:Mail to Lotus Notes required the group to push forward with efforts to improve field office connectivity, field office networks, and user workstations. Accomplishments in all of these areas resulted in completing

approximately 90% of the Region 3 Lotus Notes conversion in Fiscal Year 2000. Reliable high speed Wide Area Network (WAN) connections were installed at 10 field, with 2 more pending completion in early Fiscal Year 2001. The CSG worked closely with the FWS National Communications Center (NCC) to develop a very cost effective plan for implementing WAN connections at an additional 12 Region 3 field offices in Fiscal Year 2001. The CSG researched various software and hardware solutions for sharing modems across small field offices networks without WAN connections. A new hardware solution was implemented at these offices prior to their Notes conversions. The CSG researched and planned for improvements of field office networks, including plans for converting from the Lantastic network operating system to Windows NT. Windows NT was installed on 10 of the field office networks in preparation for the transition. Security was enhanced on a Regional level by improving the method of distribution of McAfee Antivirus signature files down to workstations. The CSG provided general customer support by processing approximately 2,500 Help Desk calls, completing efforts required for a successful Year 2000 rollover, coordinating the distribution of WO IRM IT Modernization Funding, upgrading the RO network backup system, producing a quarterly CD for field office distribution, providing on-site visits to 12 field offices, installing approximately 50 new computers, and researching new technologies such as the "Pocket PC".

Budget and Finance

The Division of Budget and Finance (Budget and Finance) coordinated the development of 22 capability statements for the Fiscal Year 2001 budget. Throughout the year, Budget and Finance provided Region 3 management with updates on the status of the Fiscal Year 2001 appropriation bills. Budget and Finance also prepared a formal response to the proposed themes for Fiscal Year 2002 budget.

Tools for Spending Resources. Budget and Finance continued its support of the Region's Remote Data Entry (RDE) users by:

- Implementing a FFS Coordinator position (responding to approximately 40 calls per week.
- Developing and distributing RDE manuals to more than 120 locations.
- Updating vendor information included in the accounting system.
- Issuing fast pay, field payment, obligation, and web report policies.
- Maintaining better than 97 percent compliance with Prompt Payment Act.
- Implementing procedures to ensure payments are fully documented
- Increasing the percentage of payments made electronically by 13 percent.

Budget and Finance (continued)

Budget and Finance also manages the Region's credit card program. Accomplishments included updating station information in Bank of America credit card database (120+ locations) and assisting in the reissue of 968 credit cards.

Budget and Finance coordinated over 46 Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves and assisted in updating and distributing the "Employees on the Move" handbook, the Service's policy for PCS. As required by policy, Budget and Finance coordinated formal reviews of all 67 imprest funds in the Region.

Budget and Finance implemented the Region's Corporate Master Table (CMT). The CMT is the official listing of all Service organization information. Implementing the CMT included verifying and maintaining a wealth of information on all 166 organizations within the Region. Instructions for using the CMT were developed and distributed throughout the Region.

Other tools provided to Budget and Finance customers included:

- Developing an intranet site with budget and finance information (http://r3ftp.fws.gov/aba/finance).
- Providing presentations at the administrative workshop.
- Providing assistance in migration to new travel management company (Omega World Travel).
- Assisting in updating the Region's delegation of authority document.

Budget Execution. Budget and Finance regularly provided Regional management with status reports showing Fiscal Year 1999 and Fiscal Year 2000 resource management balances. The Fiscal Year 2000 resource management obligation rate improved significantly from Fiscal Year 1999 (from 93.9 percent to 97 percent).

Contracting and General Services

Implemented the Interior Department Electronic Acquisition System (IDEAS) in the Regional CGS office to acquire goods and services and implemented the electronic commerce module for certain commercial items.

Utilized procedures authorized by Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act and Federal Acquisition Reform Act to award significant contracts under design/build criterion. The contracts were awarded on time and within budget.

Emphasized continuous quality improvement by using quality improvement teams to address specific elements of our operation to ensure that tasks are necessary and being performed in the most efficient way possible .

Placed increased emphasis on customer service. All CGS staff attended customer service training and worked with our field stations

to identify their needs and implement actions to meet those needs such as electronic notification when contracts are awarded. Conducted a customer service survey of our field stations by telephone to determine level of satisfaction with the services we provide and identify areas we could improve upon.

Diversity and Civil Rights

Diversity and Civil Rights (DCR) staff provided Dr. Peggy Riley of Diversity Dynamics International for Equal Employment Opportunity training at the AO/PL conference held in Minneapolis, Minn. Dr. Riley's presentation was titled "Diversity in the New Millenium".

A senior trial attorney from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission provided information to the Regional Management Team about supervisors' responsibilities to maintain a work environment free from sexual harassment and their responsibilities if they receive a sexual harassment complaint. The Office for Diversity and Civil Rights Programs has purchased three Sexual Harassment training videos that are being circulated throughout all offices and field stations. This training is mandatory for all employees.

Lis Evans, director of the Environmental Justice Program with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, presented an overview of environmental justice and how it relates to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to approximately 85 project leaders in Region 3.

The Human Resource Advisory Committee provided the Cultural Awareness Forum to members of the Regional Office. Approximately 215 employees attended during the three dates of the Forum. The Forum provided employees with information on different cultures, perceptions and barriers of diverse groups.

The Sexual Orientation Special Emphasis Program Manager and the Federal Women's Program Manager provided leadership to the Federal Executive Board's Diversity Council for the Federal Women's Program Clothing Drive. Local Federal Agencies participated and provided 1208 clothing items for a value of over \$4,300.00 using price estimates from Good Will.

The Human Resource Advisory Committee held the 10th Annual Cultural Diversity Luncheon on March 21, 2000. The luncheon featured Tou Ger Xiong, a Hmong comedian. The luncheon provided a wide variety of diverse dishes for 53 employees from the Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Federal Executive Board of Minnesota.

A briefing on issues surrounding sexual orientation was provided to the Regional Management Team by a representative from

Diversity and Civil Rights (continued)

OutFront Minnesota, a local organization supporting gay, lesbian, bixesual, and transgender issues.

EEO Specialist provided training to Region 1 outdoor recreation specialists on Department of Interior regulations, legislation, the Service-wide Accessibility Team and the Accessibility Tracking System.

EEO specialist and landscape architect provided a briefing on the status of the Service's Accessibility Tracking System to the Washington Office for External Programs staff in April.

EEO specialist and landscape architect provided a briefing on the status of SWAT and the Service's Accessibility Tracking System to Washington Office Administration (ABA) and Refuges (ARW) staffs, as well as the newly appointed Director for Diversity and Civil Rights Programs in June.

The Human Resource Advisory Committee provided the Cultural Awareness Forum to employees from Ottawa NWR, Michigan Private Lands Office, Great Lakes Coordination Office and East Lansing Field Office in East Lansing, Michigan. The Forum provided employees with information on different cultures, perceptions and barriers regarding diverse groups.

The Sexual Orientation Special Emphasis Program Manager and two other Region 3 employees participated in the Minnesota AIDS Walk and raised over \$300 in donations.

A presentation was provided to the Regional Management Team regarding the history, accomplishments, work-plan and by-laws for the Region 3 Human Resource Advisory Committee in an effort to provide guidance on recognizing Special Emphasis Observances throughout the year.

As vice chair of the Federal Executive Board Diversity Council, the Native American Special Emphasis Program Manager provided a presentation to the U. S. Postal Service regarding the responsibilities of an SEPM and membership of the FEB Diversity Council.

The Native American SEPM and the ARD-ABA provided presentation at the Federal Women's Fall Training Day co-chaired by the Region 3 Federal Women's Program Manager.

Mingo Job Corps Center

The Center staff received training on time management and team building. The training was provided by a dynamic speaker from Florida. During the past summer the Center has remained at full capacity (224 students). This has enabled the Center to bring students in every two weeks instead of once per week. U.S. Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson visited the Center this year and spoke

with students. The Center was selected as a Satellite One-Stop Center for Service Delivery 11. Individuals are allowed to seek assistance on Internet job searches, resume writing, letter writing, typing test, and labor market information.

Administration

During the past Fiscal Year, a new training plan was completed and a new Standard Operating Procedure was developed. The Center director is on the Service Delivery 11 Work Investment (WIA) Act Board and the Youth Council Board. The Mingo Job Corps joined partnerships with the Susanna Wesley Family Learning Center, Spirals, Caring Communities, and Missouri Mentoring to write a grant proposal for a WIA Grant. (The Center received the grant.) A new telephone system was installed. This new system has features such as voice mail. A staff is being utilized to drive Mingo students to and from their STW sites.

Behavior Management

The Behavior Management was revised and implemented. Students are now called Student Employees, Center Review Boards are called Employee Hearing, Center Standards Officer is the Student Employee Personnel Officer, etc.

Counseling

The Jr. JACS Club works with the local nursing homes and other community service projects. This group participated in the Make A Difference Day and planted over 5,000 daffodils in the community. They have assisted the United Gospel Rescue Mission in enhancing their kitchen facilities. The P/PEP system was improved to prepare students for employment and actual performance appraisals. Students are reviewed on employability factors and are counseled on the achievement of those goals established at the PEP. The evaluation form has been revised to reflect such employability skills. A "Speakers Bureau" has been developed on Center and local agencies and professionals have volunteered time to come and talk about real life issues with students. (Examples: dating violence, esteem issues, etc.) The Mingo Job Corps Alumni Charter is being developed and the first induction ceremony of alumni will take place August 25. Community Service projects for the charter are beginning as well. The Center is above capacity and is presently on biweekly input. The orientation dorm has been reinstated and is allowing for greater emphasis on Mingo's new student population.

Education

A new curriculum was developed. This has allowed all instructors a planning period in the day. The applied academics class has been developed. The education and vocational instructors work together to assist students in obtaining the necessary reading and math skills for their vocation.

Placement

Conducted a successful Job Shadow Day. This was coordinated with the Puxico High School. Approximately 25 students came on Center and participated. One Mingo student was selected to fly to Washington D.C. to shadow Congresswoman Jo Ann Emerson. One Mingo student was chosen to shadow Program manager,

Krista McCracken in St. Louis, Missouri. A Job Fair was held on Center. Approximately 500 individuals came on Center and toured the campus. About 25 businesses participated. During Make A Difference Day, Jay Altman, staff, and a group of students went to Haven House in Poplar Bluff. These individuals painted, raked leaves, etc. During National Youth Services Days the entire Center worked on community and refuge projects. Mingo Community Relations Council received a runner up certificate from the Alpha Awards. Mingo Job Corp has conducted a successful Industry Council meeting and Vocational Trade Review.

Residential

Lights for the softball field were installed. Many items were purchased through modernization funding (mountain bikes, ping pong tables, paintball equipment, weight equipment, safety pads for the gym, and board games.) Recreation Supervisor position was filled.

Vocation

The vocational department has completed miscellaneous community vocational skills training projects for the Poplar Bluff Park Service (e.g., the construction of a road to the sports complex.) Utilized modernization funds of \$42,240 to bring vocational trades up to industries standards. Completed the roofing on the new education building. Completed work on the water treatment plant. Completed HVAC work on the recreation hall and Dorm 1. Completed the concrete work on the Paint Mock Up. Maintenance position was filled. The installation of door closures for Dorm 5 was completed. The warehouse alarm system was completed.

Wellness Center

The Wellness Center, formerly Health Services, has geared to making students accountable for their time. They have successfully implemented an appointment system. Students are now required to make appoints to see the doctor or nurses. The vacancies for this department have been filled.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001

Priorities for Budget and Administration in Fiscal Year 2001 include:

Customer Service: Continue to explore ways to provide seamless administrative support to the field and Regional Office.

Streamlining: Continue to explore ways to improve and streamline the Regional administrative process.

Employees: Recruit, train, reward, and retain a quality workforce that reflects the diversity of this Nation's population.

Division Specific Priorities

Engineering Vision

Provide quality and timely engineering services and maintain a motivated staff through training and use of up-to-date available technology.

Resource Management. Complete planning and design for Refuge, Fisheries, and Job Corps resource management projects, identified and funded, in accordance with written criteria provided by the appropriate Programs.

Construction. Complete planning and design for construction funded projects, in accordance with criteria provided in approved Project Data Sheets (PDS's), and within agreed schedules.

Construction Management. Provide construction management and inspection services for all resource management and construction projects.

Realignment. Continue efforts to adjust workload to meet changing project criteria. Look for opportunities to utilize outside sources to meet peak demands for design, drafting and construction management services.

Information. Create engineering web page to provide better customer service.

Safety Vision

Provide proactive safety support for the Region, with timely guidance and oversight of Regional safety practices.

Safety. Complete a review of all Station inspections and implement an internet accessible data base tracking system for inspections and findings. Assist Stations to address safety findings, and close inspection findings to greatest degree possible.

Update existing Station inspection protocol for CDSOs. Develop and implement a Station Safety inspection by Regional Safety Office personnel program. Conduct 10 formal Regional Office Safety inspections, using developed program.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001 (continued)

Implement accident reduction program to reduce Regional safety incidence, by the national goal of 3 percent (targeting strains, and sprains).

Coordinate and conduct CPR, First Aid, Defensive Driving Course, BBP, and assist Refuges with Heavy Equipment Operators Training. Coordinate additional training classes for collateral duty safety personnel who have not taken the OSHA 600 class.

Information. Enhance safety web Page for CDSO usage, exchange of information, and to provide managers with up-to-date electronic information to report station inspections, accident and injury statistics, and training.

Technical Assistance. Assist supervisors, managers, and collateral safety officers so they can better manage their facilities and implement pro active safety programs.

Environmental Compliance. Complete a review of all compliance audits conducted to date and close audit findings to greatest degree possible. Conduct 20 formal compliance audits and provide environmental compliance guidance to all field stations and Regional Office program management. Assist Stations with compliance issues relating with new Executive Orders and initiatives. Conduct and coordinate Resource Conservation and Recover Act (RCRA) training for Regional Personnel.

Prepare Regional Management for Environmental Management Review (EMR) to be conducted with cooperation of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Boat Operator's Training. Work with the Fisheries and Refuge Supervisors to meet the training requirements for boat operators.

Personnel Vision

Provide customer-focused consultant ant technical services, in the areas of human resources management and development, that support the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service mission.

Benefits and Employee Express. Market Employee Express to increase employee usage for actions allowed in the system. Communicate new Thrift Savings Plan options and other benefits information to employees. Administer open seasons and accomplish work expected due to Retirement Error Correction Legislation.

Employee Relations. Participate with DCR and the Region's Conflict Resolution Specialists to pursue resolution of employee issues at the lowest possible level and continue to work with the Region's Conflict Resolution Specialists to encourage the unions

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001 (continued)

to participate in the new CORE program. Expand the Employee Relations website to include samples of other commonly used correspondence such as leave restriction letters, informal grievance decision, etc. In the area of Work/life Initiatives market existing and additional initiatives that are implemented. Finally, pursue additional options for employees to obtain ethics training such as additional videos, and broader use of NCTC downlinks.

FPPS. Establish and maintain new route paths in FPPS. Update e-mail addresses in FPPS, so everyone will be aware via Lotus Notes when they receive a new action. Add and update FPPS users. As additional information becomes available assess the new FHRIS (Federal Human Resources Information System) project to integrate its use into the Region.

Pay Administration and Improving Customer Service. Complete customer service improvement projects initiated in Fiscal Year 2000.

Staffing. Actively participate in Service-wide Projects such as Quick Hire implementation, USAJOBS announcement enhancements, and minimum education course requirement standardization via the Staffing Counterpart Group. In addition, provide increased quality improvements to the SCEP and STEP hiring process, student evaluation process, and continue to partner with Diversity and Civil Rights (DCR) in these efforts.

Classification. Establish a procedure to maintain current Position Description (PD) files and purge the inactive PD files in a consistent and timely manner.

Computer Support Group Vision

Provide quality customer service to Region 3 computer users by supporting and enhancing existing systems, and researching and planning transitions to new automated information systems and technologies.

Regional Networks. Transition field office networks to industry standard network operating systems according to Region 3 network configuration standards. Enhance network security throughout the Region. Research and plan for the direction Region 3 networks will move in the next several years.

Connectivity. Improve network connectivity through implementation of new technological solutions. Continue to work with the Service Network Communications Center to implement the Region 3 cost savings plan for conversion of field offices from modem dial-ups Internet access to WAN connections.

Electronic Mail. Complete the Region 3 field office transition from cc:Mail to Lotus Notes.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001 (continued)

Customer Service. Enhance user support customer service. Provide technical advice, policies, guidance, and instructions. Research and implement methods for improved efficiencies in delivery of customer support, including remote management options.

Finance Vision

Provide financial management services to field and Regional Office employees so they can understand financial implications while accomplishing the mission of the Service.

Financial. Assist programs in obtaining additional financial resources. Coordinate Region 3 budget requests and provide information on pending appropriations.

RDE Support. Maintain 90 percent or better compliance in obtaining taxpayer identification numbers, maintain 97 percent or better compliance with Prompt Payment Act, increase number percentage of payments made electronically, and provide quarterly training for FFS-RDE users.

Credit Card Program. Provide training on use of EAGLS, manage delinquencies, and do a statistical sampling of purchases.

PCS Coordination. Implement move management services and formulate and disseminate new PCS guidance.

Imprest Fund Management. Implement Headquarters process for reducing imprest funds and coordinate reviews of each fund.

Information. Continue to update web page with relevant information.

Financial Commitments and Obligations. Provide training for managers on budget issues, implement standard Budget Tracking Reports, and develop and issue monthly benchmark report.

Contracting and General Services Vision

Provide professional, high quality services to the Regional Office and filed stations congruent with the mission of the Service, and contribute to its fulfillment through a motivated, well trained staff using up-to-date technologies and methods.

Customer Service. Reorganize Contracting staff into teams which will work with a defined set of field stations for all acquisition and related transactions to improve communications between the CGS staff and field stations and enhance the rapport among the personnel through continuous interaction with the same people.

Space Management. Establish a database for all leases of space in the Region so managers have up-to-date information..

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001 (continued)

Information. Establish Web Page to improve the dissemination of information to field stations and the general public.

IDEAS. Implement Interior Department Electronic Acquisition System (IDEAS) Federal Financial System interface module to enable Contracting Officers to obligate funds at the finance center with a press of a button in the IDEAS system.

Diversity and Civil Rights Vision

Provide technical and consultant assistance to Regional managers and supervisors in accomplishing their responsibilities in the areas of civil rights; recruitment, development and retention of a diverse workforce; accessibility; and promotion of a work environment that values and supports all employees.

Customer Service. Partner with the Division of Personnel Management through monthly partnership meetings to promote greater effectiveness and efficiency in the development and delivery of human resource and diversity services.

Enhanced Services. Enhance the selection approval process by developing procedures to provide statistical information on under represented groups to selecting officials.

Accessible Web Site. Expand coverage of the Diversity and Civil Rights (DCR) web site to include information regarding accessibility, complaint process information, and additional resources.

Mingo Job Corps Center Vision

Establish and maintain a safe, positive instructional environment which encourages the educational, vocational, and social growth and development of Mingo students and staff.

Retention of Students. Maintain a weekly termination rate below 3.2.

Employability. Ensure all areas are focused on employability of students and the quality factors of the DOL Assessment Guide.

School-to Work. Continue to strengthen the School-to-Work process.

Placement. Place students in quality jobs and careers.

Staff. Recruit and retain a diverse work force of staff who have high expectations for themselves and the students.

Community Links. Continue to strengthen community links.

Facilities: Improve the Center's facilities, such as the new education building and paint shop, and enhanced additions to Dorm 4 and the Administration Building.

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Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report Region 3



--Photo by Scott Flaherty
Gray Wolf Recovery. Region 3
Ecological Services staff led the
national effort to reclassify the
status of the gray wolf (Canis
lupus) from "endangered" to
"threatened" on the endangered
species list.

Program Description and Mission

The Ecological Services mission is to ensure healthy fish and wildlife populations and the health of their environments. This mission is accomplished by protecting and conserving migratory birds, endangered species and their ecosystems. The following programs carry out the Ecological Services mission.

The Habitat Conservation Program within Ecological Services helps other federal agencies plan projects (e.g. roads, flood control projects, navigation projects) to avoid or minimize harm to fish, wildlife and their habitats. This program helps implement the Clean Water Act by reviewing projects that may affect wetlands and then provides assistance in the design of projects to avoid impacts to fish and wildlife. The Habitat Conservation Program also ensures fish and wildlife impacts are considered and addressed when federal power projects are licensed or relicensed, so that fish and wildlife benefits to people are not lost.

The Endangered Species Program within Ecological Services identifies species that are or could become endangered and protects them under the Endangered Species Act. This program then works to recover these rare and declining species. The Endangered Species Program also works with government and private partners to find ways to conserve species of concern.

The Environmental Contaminants Program within Ecological Services works with partners to prevent contamination and maintain healthy ecosystems for fish and wildlife. Service biologists in the program identify contamination that adversely affects the health of fish, wildlife and their ecosystems. As a federal trustee, the Service negotiates settlements from polluters to restore areas affected by contaminants so that they once again support fish and wildlife and the associated benefits to local citizens.

The Private Lands Program within Ecological Services gives private landowners financial and technical assistance in restoring wetlands, prairies, woodlands and other areas on their land. This program guides wetland and natural area restoration efforts on private lands to achieve multiple benefits, such as floodwater storage, water quality improvement or migratory bird conservation. The Private Lands Program also builds partnerships with other agencies,

Summary of Fiscal Year 2000 Accomplishments

organizations and corporations to pool resources needed to assist in restoration projects.

Endangered Species Gray Wolf



--Photo by Joel Trick

Public Meetings. Regional staff conducted a series of wolf informational meetings in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan

Piping Plover



--National Park Service Photo

A Call for Habitat. Region 3, in concert with other Service Regions, proposed designating areas of the Great Lakes, southeastern United States and the Gulf of Mexico as critical habitat for the federally listed piping plover.

With continuing progress in wolf recovery in the Great Lakes states and other areas, Region 3 developed and published a proposed rule to reclassify wolves from endangered to threatened in Wisconsin and Michigan, as well as the Dakotas. The gray wolf's status in Minnesota remained unchanged, pending completion of the state's management plan by the Department of Natural Resources. The proposed rule was published in the Federal Register in July 2000, and addressed the status of not only Region 3 wolves, but those in the northeast, Rocky Mountains and west. A round of public information meetings was launched in the affected states in this region and across the country to help the public understand the proposal and facilitate the public comment process, and preparations were made for public hearings in the fall. Outreach efforts continued with development of an informational display, ongoing updates of fact sheets and publication of "Wolf Tracks," and development of Website materials.

In June Region 3, in coordination with other regions, prepared and published a proposal to designate critical habitat for the piping plover, an imperiled shorebird that inhabits the shorelines of the Great Lakes, southeastern states and Gulf of Mexico. Critical habitat for the breeding populations of piping plovers on the Great Lakes was proposed along approximately 189 miles of shoreline. This includes areas that support, or have the potential to support, open, sparsely vegetated sandy habitats such as sand spits or sand beaches associated with wide, unforested systems of dunes and inter-dune wetlands, and the plover's prey species. In the wintering areas, critical habitat is being proposed along 1,672 miles of coastline in North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. These include coastal areas with intertidal beaches and flats and associated dune systems and flats above annual high tide. Intertidal sites offer foraging and roosting sites while areas above high tide provide refuge from high winds and cold weather. The Service held informational hearings in the affected states during the summer to receive public comments before developing a final rule on critical habitat designation.

In addition to these efforts, Region 3 personnel also worked on a wide variety of other projects that contributed to recovery and conservation of listed and candidate species. Generally, the work is a result of many small projects scattered over the range of the species. In combination, these small projects are the backbone of recovery progress for listed species. Examples include surveys and habitat protection for the endangered Kirtland's warbler; mussel monitoring in the St. Croix River; and development of an educational video in partnership with the state of Missouri on the endangered Topeka shiner and threatened Niangua darter.

Section 6 Funding

Region 3 made available to Midwest states a total of \$418,387 in Section 6 funds for implementation of 14 conservation projects aimed at recovering a number of rare or declining species or preventive measures for species at risk. Targeted species include one threatened and one special concern snake; two endangered birds; one endangered butterfly; one endangered and two candidate fish; five endangered, two special concern and several other mussels; and one threatened and one special concern plant.

Region 3 also continued work on a number of new and revised recovery plans, the blueprints which help the Service, states and other partners in recovering listed species. Species included the Karner blue butterfly, piping plover-Great Lakes population, Illinois cave amphipod, Lake Erie water snake, Indiana bat, white cat's paw pearly mussel, Hines emerald dragonfly, Pitcher's thistle, eastern prairie fringed orchid, running buffalo clover, Higgins' eye pearly mussel, and purple cat's paw pearly mussel.

Least Tern Habitat Conservation

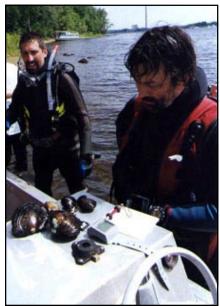
--USFWS Photo
Tern Habitat Protected. Interior
Least Terns will benefit from
Indiana's first habitat conservation plan developed in cooperation
with Cinergy Corporation.

Other highlights:

Endangered least terns will benefit from provisions of Indiana's first habitat conservation plan, developed by Cinergy Corporation. Cinergy, Indiana's largest electric supplier, operates Gibson Generating Station in southern Indiana, with a cooling lake that has become a favored nesting site for the least tern. Since 1986, when terns were discovered nesting on the dike at Gibson Lake, Cinergy has undertaken intensive efforts to ensure the safety of tern nest sites and enhance habitat. Populations climbed through the years, with the population topping out at 85 nesting adults and 72 fledglings in 1998. The expanding population began using ash disposal ponds and gravel access roads as nest sites, as well as the dike. With this expansion came concern by Cinergy that incidental take might occur, and officials approached the Bloomington Field Office for advice. The result is a habitat conservation plan under which Cinergy commits to continuing efforts to protect and enhance habitat on the Gibson Lake dike, the tern colony's primary nesting area. Cinergy is also cooperating with the Service and other partners to develop and maintain Cane Ridge Wildlife Area, a unit of the Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge. The net result will be increased nesting opportunities for this easternmost - and Indiana's only - colony of least terns.

Upper Mississippi River Section 7

Region 3 completed work on a biological opinion for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers after consulting with the Corps on operation and maintenance of the 9-foot navigation channel on the Upper Mississippi River from Minneapolis to Cairo, Illinois. The consultation focused on ensuring that federally listed endangered and threatened species in the Upper Mississippi River are protected while allowing other activities, such as commercial shipping, to take place. The consultation examined the impacts of operating the lock and dam system, channel maintenance dredging and material



--Photo by Scott Flaherty

Searching for Zebra Mussels.
Twin Cities Field Office staff joined other federal and state agencies to form a zebra mussel task force aimed at controlling the spread of the invasive species in the St. Croix and Upper Mississippi Rivers.

disposal, construction/maintenance of channel training structures, and of activities such as navigation, on several endangered and threatened species. These species included the endangered Higgins' eye pearly mussel and winged mapleleaf; the threatened bald eagle and the endangered least tern; the endangered Indiana bat; the endangered pallid sturgeon; and one threatened plant, the decurrent false aster.

The Service's biological opinion concluded that operation and maintenance of the nine-foot navigation channel is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Higgins' eye pearly mussel and the pallid sturgeon. Because of this finding, the two agencies developed alternatives that would both conserve the species and allow continued operation of the nine-foot channel.

The Higgins' eye pearly mussel is jeopardized because of continued commercial barge transportation in the Upper Mississippi River with vessels and equipment infested with zebra mussels. The "reasonable and prudent" alternative for the Higgins' eye pearlymussel includes development of a plan to relocate Higgins' eye to suitable zebra mussel-free, historically occupied habitats, and conducting a reconnaissance study to control zebra mussels in the Upper Mississippi River.

The pallid sturgeon is jeopardized because of the expected continued degradation of its habitat. The reasonable and prudent alternative for the pallid sturgeon includes implementation of a long-term habitat restoration program and conducting a pallid sturgeon habitat/life history study in the Middle Mississippi River.

The Service's biological opinion concluded that incidental take is anticipated for the winged mapleleaf mussel and least tern, and reasonable and prudent measures to minimize take were recommended. The opinion also found that while the project may affect individual bald eagles and Indiana bats, the impacts will be offset by management actions proposed by the Corps or will be negligible and will not rise to the level of incidental take. Adverse effects will result for the decurrent false aster, but the species will not be jeopardized.

Gray Bat

Consultation between Region 3's Bloomington Field Office and the U.S. Army resulted in a plan to manage the gray bat at the Indiana Army Ammunition Plant in southern Indiana. The plan helps maintain and enhance gray bats on the installation, which encompasses a cave system supporting Indiana's only gray bat colony. Key points of the plan are protection of karst features, forested stream corridors, and water quality. Conservation of gray bats at the installation is of particular concern because the Army is in the process of leasing and excessing the base; portions will be used for Charlestown State Park while other areas will be developed for commercial use.

Lake Erie Water Snake



Lake Erie water snake.

Purple Cat's Paw Pearly Mussel



--USFWS Photo

Mussel Recovery. The Service is working with federal, state and non-governmental partners in Ohio to conserve the nation's only reproducing population of the purple cat's paw pearly mussel.

Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake

Lake Erie water snake recovery and conservation includes public education, population monitoring and Section 7 consultation. The Service and the Ohio Division of Wildlife work with the Corps of Engineers, developers and private landowners to avoid or minimize habitat loss and improve existing habitat for the water snake. The public information campaign is successful thanks to ongoing communication with landowners, local businesses, and agencies along with posters, brochures, and media articles. An annual children's poster contest competition is held on Lake Erie island schools. The Service also produced Lake Erie water snake conservation signs for landowners to post on their property. The sign has been extremely popular. Out of 900 residents who live on four Lake Erie islands in Ohio, over 400 have requested and received the sign from the Service's Reynoldsburg Ohio Field Office. The Service believes the Lake Erie water snake can recover quickly if people learn to "live and let live" while sharing the islands with Lake Erie water snakes.

The Service's Reynoldsburg, Ohio, field office is working with the Ohio Division of Wildlife, Otterbein University, Natural Resource Conservation Service, local officials, and landowners to reverse the decline of the highly endangered purple cat's paw pearly mussel. The Service and Ohio Division of Wildlife formed a watershed partners group to conserve the country's only reproducing population of purple cat's paw pearly mussels. The Watershed Group tracks important watershed issues and implements projects important to purple cat's paw mussel recovery. The Service, Ohio Division of Wildlife, and Ohio River Valley Ecosystem Mussel Subgroup pooled funds to implement habitat improvement for landowners, implement landowner contacts, map the mussel's habitat, and define the mussel's population's size and geographic distribution in Ohio.

Survival and recovery of the purple cat's paw pearly mussel may be possible due to work of the Service and its partners in Ohio. Side benefits include public understanding of the importance of mussels, fish, and high quality aquatic habitats. The public better understands the devastating effects of stream alteration, sedimentation, and pollution on streams and rivers.

While developing the status assessment for the Eastern massasauga rattlesnake, it became clear that most of the remaining populations were on public or other protected lands. Management of those lands would be the key to saving or losing the species. Therefore, Region 3 developed a management strategy centered on ensuring that public lands are managed to avoid harm to massasaugas, at a minimum, and if possible, to improve habitat for the species. A handbook for land managers was prepared and distributed through the Ecological Services field offices to Refuges, the state natural resource management agencies and to other land managers such as nature reserves and The Nature Conservancy. Because



Eastern massasauga rattlesnake.

management for a poisonous snake is controversial, emotional, and easily misunderstood, the ES field offices are working individually with land managers and owners to build support for beneficial practices.

In another massasauga conservation effort, the Marion, Illinois suboffice continues to participate as part of an interagency team to develop a management plan for the Eastern massasauga rattle-snake at Carlyle Lake in Southern Illinois. Carlyle Lake is a Corps of Engineers reservoir managed primarily for flood control and recreation. The Illinois DNR also manages two state parks and a state fish and wildlife management area located on Corps' lands. Potentially the largest remaining population of Eastern massasaugas in the country occurs at Carlyle Lake. However, the species may be threatened by continued development for recreational use around the lake. The management plan should specify the research and management actions necessary to maintain a healthy, viable massasauga population and allow for continued recreational development and use at appropriate sites.

Loggerhead Shrike

The Service's Bloomington, Indiana, Field Office is cooperating with Canadian researchers in their study of loggerhead shrike genetics. The research will assess patterns of genetic differentiation in Canadian populations of loggerhead shrikes, including differences relative to U.S. populations. The loggerhead shrike is listed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada as a threatened species in western Canada and an endangered species in eastern Canada. There are nine recognized subspecies of the loggerhead shrikes in the United States. The San Clemente loggerhead shrike is listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Other U.S. subspecies are not listed, but have experienced large scale and widespread declines. To date, 75 samples of genetic material have been obtained from U.S. researchers. The Service recognizes the loggerhead shrike as one of 30 migratory nongame birds of management concern in the U.S., and the species is listed as State endangered, threatened, or a species of concern in at least 28 states. Specifically, researchers will compare patterns of genetic diversity among populations, characterize hybrid zones, compare genetics of Canadian and U.S. populations, and use genetic information to aid in the identification of wintering grounds for migratory populations. Ultimately, the research will aid in the development of more effective conservation and management strategies for the species. The study will also improve understanding of loggerhead shrike subspecific variation, which has been identified as a research need for this species.

Environmental Contaminants

When natural resources are harmed or destroyed as the result of pollution, the Superfund law, or CERCLA, provides that federal, state, and tribal resource agencies may act as trustees for natural resources. As trustees, the Service and other agencies document the injuries, recover damages from polluters for those injuries, and then use the money for habitat restoration.

Region 3 continues to implement the Natural Resources Damage Assessment program on behalf of the Department of the Interior. Region 3 evaluated several dozen contaminated sites for which clean-up by the EPA is under way. Working in close coordination with other trustees – other Interior bureaus, states and tribes – Region 3 assisted EPA in designing cleanups under CERCLA that would be more beneficial to endangered species, migratory birds and fish, and the habitats that support them. The Service also achieved legal settlements at several sites which will result in more complete restorations and more productive habitats. Highlights of Contaminants Program for the past year include:

Investigations

Contaminants personnel from the Reynoldsburg, Ohio, field office investigated a kill of native and zebra mussels in a 4-mile reach of the Ohio River, and also participated in a frog deformity study at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. Reynoldsburg staff are also participating in the Duck and Otter Creek Partnership to improve habitat and water quality in these two Lake Erie tributaries.

The Rock Island, Illinois, field office completed a study report for the Union Slough contaminants investigation. The investigation provided water quality data and information that was used by the refuge manager to create an artificial chemical treatment wetland. Over 3,000 acres of refuge wetlands will benefit from improvements to tile water quality. These refuge wetlands, it is hoped, will become more productive with increased forage resources for thousands of migratory birds that nest, overwinter and stage at the refuge during spring and fall.

Rock Island staff also led an interdisciplinary team study that suggests that shovelnose sturgeon from the Middle Mississippi River are adversely affected by contaminants. The team included members from Region 3's Rock Island field office and Marion suboffice, LaCrosse Fish Health Lab, U.S.G.S.-Gainesville Fish Contaminants Science Center and George Washington University Department of Pathology. The team investigated the health of shovelnose sturgeon as a surrogate species for the federal- and state-listed endangered pallid sturgeon, a closely related species with a similar life history. Male sturgeon from a polluted reach of the Mississippi River south of St. Louis had intersex characteristics including female reproductive parts. Many different types of contaminants are suspected of being sex hormone mimics and can disrupt normal biological processes. Biologists from the Marion, Illinois, Fisheries Resource Office and Neosho National Fish Hatchery will join the study team for an advanced investigation. The study information is especially important because the Service has determined that Mississippi River navigation projects proposed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will jeopardize the survival of the pallid sturgeon.



--Photo by Lisa Williams

PCB Cleanup. The first barge load of contaminated sediment from Michigan's Saginaw River was removed in April 2000. The cleanup is part of a \$28.2 million settlement with General Motors and other parties.

Ecological Services and Refuge biologists worked together to transfer the former Savanna Army Depot to the National Wildlife Refuge System. Contaminant specialists provided technical assistance to pollution response agencies for the Superfund remediation project and served as lead federal natural resource trustee. Endangered species biologists provide consultation services to the federal action agencies to protect listed species. Refuge operations specialists and habitat conservation biologists from Ecological Services help plan for the reuse of the former military installation for conservation. These efforts will result in the preservation of about 3,000 acres of bottomland hardwood forest and backwater wetlands along the Upper Mississippi River and nearly 9,000 acres of upland sand prairie and savanna. The upland prairies contain many state listed endangered plant species that are beneficial for federally listed insect species. The planning effort at the depot includes many disciplines from several federal and state agencies working together.

Other investigation and cleanup activities included work by the East Lansing Field Office on a possible hazardous site along the Saginaw River – discovered by a staff member walking through the site; work by the Rock Island and Marion offices to assist the Superfund Project Team at Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge; and efforts by the Chicago Field Office as part of the Joliet/Midewin Ecological Work Group. The group was organized to recommend soil contaminant remediation levels at the Midewin Tallgrass Prairie that are protective of the environment and compatible with development of the prairie. The Joliet Army Ammunition Plant, which contains hazardous waste contamination, is being transferred to the U.S. Forest Service as the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. The work group compiled available scientific information and estimated contaminant levels which would be safe for plants, wildlife and the environment.

Restoration and Settlement

The first barge load of PCB-contaminated sediment from Michigan's Saginaw River was removed April 13, 2000, which begins the removal of contaminated sediment funded by the \$28.2 million Natural Resource Damage Assessment settlement with General Motors and other parties. Contaminants dredged from the river near Bay City and Essexville, Michigan will be placed in a confined disposal facility operated by the Corps of Engineers. The Service, the State of Michigan, and the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe reached the settlement with General Motors in the fall of 1998. The settlement also provided for restoration of coastal wetlands and lake plain prairies around Saginaw Bay. Also, the settlement funds will purchase 1,677 acres of wildlife habitat, restore fish spawning grounds at Tobico Marsh and fund operation of the Green Point Learning Center in Saginaw, Mich; fund construction and operation of two boat launches on the river, and improvements to one on the bay, and future monitoring. The dredging project will remove approximately 90 percent of the PCBs remaining in the lower river.

Gary Lagoons

Bloomington, Indiana, Field Office participated as a trustee in a settlement that resulted in the Indiana Department of Natural Resources receiving the deed to the restored Gary Lagoons cleanup site in northwestern Indiana. This was the last step in a long, tedious process to protect this rare dune and swale habitat that the Chicago-Gary Regional Airport wanted to pave in anticipation of a future airport expansion. In the 1970s, this site was used to illegally dispose of hazardous wastes into a wetland associated with a relatively large tract of remnant dune and swale habitat. In 1996, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) spent \$4.0 million removing 10,250 tons of toxic wastes from the wetlands at Gary Lagoons site. In addition, more than 500,000 gallons of contaminated water was treated and removed. NRDA settlement negotiations began in 1997 for this site. The 7-acre site will be managed by the DNR's Division of Nature Preserves as a new addition to its two nearby nature preserves.

The Bloomington Indiana Field Office also participated as trustee in two other settlements for natural resource damages resulting from contamination, including the Fort Wayne Reduction Dump Superfund site in Fort Wayne, Indiana and the American Chemical Services site in northern Indiana. The Fort Wayne dump had been an uncontrolled hazardous waste dump on the banks of the Maumee River, approximately 115 miles upstream of Maumee Bay, Lake Erie. The responsible parties have prepared a restoration plan and will be implementing this restoration under the oversight of the trustees. Under the settlement, title to 75 acres of agricultural land adjacent to the Maumee River will be conveved to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The responsible parties will also implement reforestation efforts on the property and pay the trustees \$90,000 in past costs and up to an additional \$8,000 for future oversight costs. Under the settlement for the American Chemical Services site, responsible parties will assist the Lake County Parks and Recreation Department with a major acquisition project (\$955,000) of 243 acres. Project partners in that effort include Indiana Heritage Trust (\$400,000), Lake Co. (\$150,000) and North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) (\$150,000). The responsible parties have contributed \$250,000 to complete this acquisition, and will give the trustees \$50,000 for wetland restoration costs on this property, and pay up to \$30,000 for Bloomington's assessment costs. The Service and other trustees will be preparing a restoration plan in cooperation with Lake County in the coming months to determine how to best utilize these settlement funds to seek restoration on this 243 acre acquisition.

The Reynoldsburg, Ohio, Field Office is involved in a \$2 million settlement for the Southern Ohio Coal Company that includes a water quality management plan for Leading Creek. The plan has been completed, a watershed coordinator has been hired, and the first two meetings of the Leading Creek Advisory Council have been held. Actual projects should be on the ground next year. In

another project of the Reynoldsburg office, as a result of informal NRDA negotiations, 884 acres of the Fernald Environmental Management Project will be dedicated to natural resources restoration. These restorations will include wetlands, prairie, forest, and stream corridor protection and restoration. The Service will maintain a continuing interest in these.

Habitat Conservation

Ecological Services biologists conserve biological diversity by representing natural resources during planning for federal construction actions such as building roads, bridges, or levees. These biologists review projects to minimize the amount of natural resources destroyed or harmed, to ensure that the least harmful option is selected, to ensure that impacts are thoroughly documented, and to ensure that those impacts are mitigated. Such reviews have a variety of benefits to the resources, such as protection of natural areas, preserving outdoor recreation opportunities, and improving water quality. They also provide a thorough and realistic analysis of project impacts and mitigation costs, reflecting the true cost of construction projects versus the benefits supplied.

Service biologists worked on a variety of habitat conservation projects across the region, including efforts by the Marion, Illinois, suboffice on a planning team to develop the Middle Mississippi River Side Channel Rehabilitation Plan. The team also includes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Missouri Department of Conservation. The Middle Mississippi, that part of the river between the mouth of the Missouri and the mouth of the Ohio, is home to the endangered pallid sturgeon and least tern and has been degraded by the operation of the 9-foot navigation channel. With fewer than half of the river's historic side channels remaining, the side channel rehabilitation plan serves to focus agency resources to maintain and enhance these important aquatic habitats.

The Reynoldsburg, Ohio, office is continuing efforts to help restore habitat along Cincinnati's Mill Creek. Working with other resource agencies, the Service and its partners hope to salvage some of Mill Creek's natural attributes. An earlier Corps of Engineers project changed the lower reach into a concrete-lined channel; initial efforts have focused on the upper reaches.

The Chicago Field Office provided the Corps of Engineers with technical assistance in a field review of the wetland delineation for a 404 permit request, and of the project plans which called for filling all 20-plus acres of wetland on the property. With this assistance and backing from the Service and US Environmental Protection Agency, the Corps denied this permit application. The developer, through a series of interagency meetings, finally crafted a plan that preserved the highest functioning wetlands on the property in a complex that preserves the existing wildlife habitat. This process exemplified a unified federal agency position in protecting high quality aquatic resources.

The Habitat Conservation Program also reviews impacts on fish and wildlife resources when federal projects are licensed or relicensed. The Columbia, Missouri, field office is participating in a review of the Osage Hydroelectric Relicensing Project, specifically Bagnell Dam which created Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri. The office is participating in stakeholder meetings and working closely with the Missouri Department of Conservation, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and others to identify studies that will address dam operation and the loss of mussels below the dam, including the endangered pink mucket pearly mussel.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Licensing/ Relicensing

Green Bay, Wis., Field Office participated in several relicensing projects. A draft hydroelectric settlement agreement was completed August 31, 1999, for six hydropower projects on Wisconsin's lower Chippewa River. That settlement will result in substantial improvements to fish and wildlife habitat when implemented. The settlement involved three Northern States Power company projects undergoing relicensing through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and included modifications to project operations for three other projects currently licensed. The settlement involved 12 stakeholders and resulted in substantial environmental benefits to the resource.

Highlights of the settlement include:

- •Modification of project operations resulting in improved fish and wildlife habitat in approximately 120 miles of river;
- •Termination of annual winter drawdowns at Lakes Holcombe and Wissota thus, preventing shoreline habitat from being dewatered and stranding aquatic organisms;
- •Creation of a fish protection fund to escrow funds to install fish exclusion devices in project intakes to prevent turbine mortality;
- •Implementation of comprehensive land management plans and recreational facilities plans for approximately 2,500 acres of licensee owned-land within the project boundaries;
- •Protection of federal and state-listed threatened and endangered species; and improvement of recreational facilities at each hydro project.

The public will benefit from economical power production, fish and wildlife protection, and improved recreation opportunities. Substantial improvements to fish and wildlife habitat in the lower Chippewa River will be realized when the hydro settlement agreement is implemented, as explained in the executive summary.

The entrainment of fish at hydroelectric projects and the subsequent turbine mortality of a portion of the entrained fish is a major issue of concern for the resources agencies during relicensing of hydro projects through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The Fish and Wildlife Service and Wisconsin and Michigan Departments of Natural Resources are working with the Wisconsin

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Licensing/ Relicensing (continued)

Electric Power Company and the Alden Research Laboratory (Holden, Mass.) to develop a prototype fish exclusion system that, if effective, could be installed at the intakes of the White Rapids and Chalk Hill Hydro Projects on the Menominee River. The Alden Research Lab. is nearing completion of flume tests with many riverine fish species including lake sturgeon, shortnose sturgeon, smallmouth bass, walleye, and American eel. The experiments measure the capability of angled bar racks and louvers to guide fish along these structures to a bypass facility. As proposed, the appropriate bar rack or louver configuration would be installed at the White Rapids and Chalk Hill Hydro Projects to guide fish around the hydro turbines and safely back to the Menominee River, downstream from the dam. Preliminary results indicate that louvers hold promise as an effective fish exclusion measure. If an effective fish exclusion system can be installed at the White Rapids and Chalk Hill Hydro Projects, the technology will likely be able to be retrofitted (and modified if necessary) to other hydro projects. Effective fish exclusion systems are needed and, when developed, will help considerably to protect riverine fish resources in numerous rivers and streams in North America where hydro power is generated.

As a requirement for the Shawano Hydroelectric Project license, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ordered the licensee to establish a Fish Enhancement Fund. Annually, funds must be deposited in that account for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin to use for resource improvements in the Wolf River in the vicinity of the hydro project. The fund was established by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as means to help compensate for entrained fish killed by hydro turbines. The agencies and tribe developed a fish enhancement plan for placing riprap on the shoreline. This first habitat improvement project to be funded was completed in August, 2000. Four hundred feet of severely eroding shoreline along the Wolf River, on the Menominee Indian Reservation, was stabilized with granite riprap. Terrestrial habitat that was being lost along the shoreline is now protected and silt and sand is no longer being deposited on the riverbed nearby. High quality smallmouth bass habitat in the vicinity of the riprap project will be restored.

Private Lands Program

The Service's Wisconsin Private Lands and Ecological Services Offices have assisted about 20 private landowners including The Nature Conservancy in the restoration or enhancement of about 713 acres of prairie or oak savanna habitat. These projects provide habitat for the Karner blue butterfly, a federally listed endangered species. All the properties are near existing Karner blue sites and those not currently occupied by the Karner blue are expected to support them in the future. The butterfly has taken up residence on four of these sites and TNC plans to reintroduce the Karner blue to select sites on their lands once sufficient restoration is completed.

Conservation Partner Award

The Green Bay, Ecological Services Field Office, along with the Service's Wisconsin Private Lands Office, received a Conservation Partner Award from The Nature Conservancy during its 40th Annual Meeting held at Lulu Lake Preserve in Walworth County, Wisconsin. The award was presented to both offices in recognition of the Service's guidance and support of Karner blue butterfly habitat restoration and enhancement work on TNC lands and other private lands in Wisconsin, in recognition of Service involvement in the development and implementation of the Wisconsin Statewide Habitat Conservation Plan for the Karner blue, and for joint conservation efforts taken with the Hine's emerald dragonfly in Door County, Wisconsin.

The Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife program has been actively restoring habitat on private lands in Wisconsin for the federally endangered Karner blue butterfly since 1998. Verification has now been received that a site restored for Karners by biologists from the Wisconsin Private Lands Office in 1998 is being used by the butterfly. The property, located in east central Wisconsin on private lands was in proximity to a known Karner population. A grassland restoration was completed in 1998 to provide Karner habitat, and observations conducted during the Karner's first flight of 2000 confirmed that Karners are using the site. Karners have lost extensive amounts of their savanna habitats throughout their range across the north central part of the country. A 5-acre site was restored in 1998 in Waushara County that is now being used by Karners as verified during the spring of 2000. The Service's restoration activities are focusing on privately owned lands where there is the greatest potential for habitat restoration.

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program ended the year on a high note in southern Illinois. The Marion, Illinois suboffice provided assistance for the restoration or creation of approximately 95 acres of wetland and associated habitat. Much of this work was accomplished in the Kaskaskia River focus area. The Kaskaskia River corridor is home to the largest contiguous tract of bottomland hardwood forest remaining in the state of Illinois. The Marion suboffice prioritizes projects that reduce/stop fragmentation of the forest and restore/enhance the valuable aquatic habitats in the area. This year the Fish and Wildlife Service contribution to private land restorations was \$25,000.00 with landowner and other contributions (primarily Illinois DNR) totaling \$63,386.00.

Also in 1999, the Marion suboffice entered into a cooperative agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to construct gates on caves occurring on private lands which are used by endangered Indiana bats and/or gray bats. Gate construction was recently completed at Toothless Cave in Jackson County, Illinois. A population of approximately 1,500 Indiana bats hibernate at this site. However, it is also frequented by recreational users which disturb the bats. The gate will ensure the bats wintering at this

location are protected from disturbance during this critical time.

Coastal Program

As part of the Service's Coastal Program in the Great Lakes. Region 3 participated in several efforts to conserve coastal resources. The East Lansing Field Office initiated work to develop a strategy to control highly invasive exotic plant species in the Grand Sable Dunes and other coastal areas. About 300 acres of spotted knapweed, red clover and various ground cover species were mapped using GPS technology. About 80 acres of federal- and state-listed plant populations, including the Pitcher's thistle and Lake Huron tansy, were also mapped to help assess the current threat to critical habitat by exotic plants. The East Lansing office also participated in a project to restore streambank habitat and reduce sediment in Antrim Creek, a tributary of Lake Michigan. The Service, with local and state partners, have developed a plan to improve habitat and water quality in this stream, a major spawning ground for numerous species of native fish. A fish-restricting culvert will be replaced, and numerous erosion sites will be restored along the creek.

The Twin Cities Field Office began a partnership with the St. Louis River Citizens Action Committee to advance natural resource conservation in the Lower St. Louis River (Duluth-Superior Harbor) and its watershed. The St. Louis River forms a 12,000-acre freshwater estuary as it flows into Lake Superior at Duluth, Minnesota and Superior, Wisconsin. This lower portion of the St. Louis River has been significantly impacted by decades of industrial, commercial and residential use; yet, the estuary continues to provide important breeding, rearing and migratory habitats for a variety of fish and wildlife species. The Service and the committee have a common interest in protecting, enhancing and restoring the fish and wildlife habitat in the Lower St. Louis River. The Service recognizes the significance of the area for lake sturgeon and piping plover reintroduction (FWS species of concern and federally listed species, respectively), migratory bird habitat, and for Great Lakes coastal wetlands. The committee represents key conservation partners in the implementation of recommendations identified by the St. Louis River System Remedial Action Plan, which was developed to address degraded water quality and related fish and wildlife problems in the lower St. Louis River. The committee has initiated the development of a Lower St. Louis River Habitat Plan which is intended to document a desired vision in which the ecological integrity and function of the estuary is sustained; the Habitat Plan is also intended to provide the basis for coordinated conservation actions to achieve the desired vision.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001

Strengthen Organization

Build strong Regional and field offices. Actively manage the fiscal and staff resources of the field offices and Regional Office toward reaching Region 3's minimum goal of 80/20 for uncontrollable and discretionary base funds.

Ecosystem Teams

Maintain and expand active participation on the Service's ecosystem teams to ensure coordination and collaboration with other ES field offices, programs, regions, and stakeholders in identifying and addressing the teams' resource priorities and goals.

Coastal Program

Implement the Service's Coastal Program in the Great Lakes through active involvement of the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team to ensure the team's goals, objectives and priorities are fully considered and integrated.

Natural Resource Damage Assessments

Manage the damage assessments or restorations for Fox River/ Green Bay, Northwest Indiana, Ottawa River, Tri-state mining district, Ashtabula River, Kalamazoo River, St. Louis River Harbor, and others, seeking opportunities to involve the ecosystem teams and/or address the teams' goals, objectives and priorities.

Endangered Species Recovery

Implement recovery tasks leading to recovery and delisting of species by facilitating partnerships, education, and conservation at an ecosystem level, emphasizing the use of Habitat Conservation Plans and Safe Harbor Agreements, with particular attention to supporting efforts to reintroduce a second migratory flock of whooping cranes that would breed in Wisconsin and overwinter in Florida, finalizing revisions to the Indiana bat recovery plan, and implementing the Karner Blue Butterfly HCP and Lake Erie water snake recovery plans.

Habitat Conservation

Participate actively in federal projects, such as the Upper Mississippi River System Navigation Study, Ohio River Mainstem Study, and St. Francis Floodway Project, non-federal hydroelectric projects administered by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and others that significantly affect Regional Resource Conservation Priorities or that have significant Congressional interest.

Regional Resource Conservation Priorities

Continue to proactively apply Ecological Service's authorities and programs to address issues associated with those federal trust species identified in Region 3's Resource Conservation Priorities.

Endangered Species Listing-Candidate Conservation

Determine the status of species and develop Conservation Agreements and proposals for federal candidate status, listing, or reclassification.

Endangered Species Consultation

Complete interagency and intra-Service consultations under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, focusing particularly on the consultation for the gypsy moth, Lower Missouri River, Indiana bat Section 7 guidelines, and monitoring implementation of the consultation for the Upper Mississippi River System Navigation Study,

coordinating with other Service regions, as needed.

Crab Orchard Cleanup

Continue to plan and implement remediations (cleanup) of the Crab Orchard NWR Superfund site, working closely with U.S. EPA and Illinois EPA to ensure compliance with all applicable environmental laws while providing for the long-term mission of the Refuge system.

Contaminants

Continue to implement the CAP manual and provide technical assistance with the CERCLA process on Service-lands and for potential acquisitions, conduct contaminant investigations, and provide spill response.

Employee Development

Maintain a productive work environment by providing timely and constructive feedback on performance, access to job-related training, improved office connectivity, and by fostering a safe, cooperative, and respectful work environment.

Continue to actively and efficiently implement the Regional Office and field office outreach plans to ensure recruitment of a talented and dedicated, diverse work force.



Frog Study. Region 3 joined other Service regions in a nationwide study to investigate the cause of frog deformities and determine the prevalence of abnormalities on National Wildlife Refuges. The frog above is from Rydell NWR in northwest Minnesota, and is missing its right calf and foot.

Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report Region 3

Migrations and Media. External Affairs provided extensive support to the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership's efforts to establish a whooping crane migration route from Wisconsin to Florida. National and international media followed the story of an ultralightled fall migration of sandhill cranes from Necedah NWR in Wisconsin to St. Martius Marsh Aquatic Preserve in Florida.



--Photo by Joan Guilfoyle

Program Description and Mission

The Office of External Affairs serves as the key advisor to the Regional Director for all matters involving public affairs, legislative and intergovernmental affairs, media relations, accomplishment reporting and Native American affairs as well as Service identification, integrated marketing in outreach delivery and products, interactive technology, partnerships and internal communications. The Office supports Service-wide and regional missions and priorities through the delivery of quality communications in order to position the Service and the Great Lakes-Big Rivers region as the recognized Federal leader regarding fish and wildlife issues. The Office is responsible for the public affairs development, improvement and integration of programs and policies relating to these matters, including the agencies' priorities in working with specific program efforts, species, ecosystems, and organizational stabilization and vitality. The Office is also responsible for the identification of issues related to the public's view and opinions of the region's work and for developing and providing new or alternative means of information that will enhance public understanding of, and support for, agency programs, activities, issues and efforts. Additionally, the Office is fully responsible for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the region's outreach capabilities, effectiveness, challenges and accomplishments.

Summary of Fiscal Year 2000 Accomplishments

An Intranet site for use by all Service employees was developed to provide useful information about the External Affairs Office and how its professional staff can help regional employees. The Intranet site hosts a wide variety of easily accessible and useful information for employees, including Regional Director's Orders, Regional Briefing Papers, Congressional Affairs links, and information on developing and printing official Service outreach publications. The address is

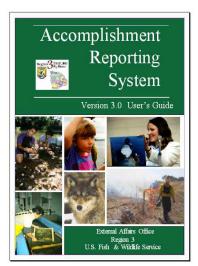
A new regional Information Dissemination System (IDS) designed to provide efficient, cost-effective information dissemination to the media, Congress and the public was developed in Fiscal Year 2000. The IDS was designed to replace both the previous fax/e-mail system and currently used "wire" services. This system will allow the Region to quickly dissemination information to specifically targeted audiences. The system is also designed to reach smaller media outlets that "wire" services do not reach.

In its continuing effort to keep the public informed about Service activities and programs, staff from External Affairs wrote and disseminated 51 news releases and four media advisories during Fiscal Year 2000. News releases ensure that members of the media, Congress, partners, and other interested stakeholders are informed of upcoming activities or recent developments within the Region. News releases and media advisories are the basic tools, used by all media, to gather information before developing a story and covering an event. The office uses standard 'wire' services, an internal fax/email system, the World Wide Web, List Servers and personal contacts to ensure the Service message gets to the correct audience in a timely and efficient manner. Once a news release or media advisory has been sent, the External Affairs staff provides support to media representatives who contact us for additional information.

Twenty-seven articles were written and published about events and activities in the Region in Fiscal Year 2000. Twenty-one of the articles were published in either Fish and Wildlife News or People, Land and Water. The development and dissemination of articles describing the activities of Region 3 personnel are a critical part of the Service's National Outreach Strategy. These articles help to improve the Service's image and increase the awareness of the American public—which improves our ability to carry out the Service mission.

Three "Special Edition Inside Region 3" publications were developed to highlight the following programs or activities - Ecosystem Approach: Fulfilling the Promise: The National Wildlife Refuge System - A Distinctly American Story; and, Division of Federal Aid: Preserving our Hunting and Fishing Heritage. These publications were developed to provide employees, partners and the public with a greater understanding of how these specific Region 3 programs help the Service to better perform its mission and serve the public.

Accomplishment Reporting System



The Accomplishment Reporting System Version 3.1 Users Guide introduced field staff to extensive upgrades to the Accomplishment Reporting System, answers frequently asked questions and offers tips for writing reports.

The Accomplishment Reporting System (ARS) and its associated information products enjoyed increased use and visibility during the year. The ARS, an Internet-based information acquisition, dissemination and data management system, is a tool that captures the breadth of activities and on-the-ground accomplishments in Region 3. To date, the ARS is used by more than 340 employees in Region 3. During Fiscal Year 2000, approximately 1, 500 reports were filed, an increase of about 175 from the previous year. Accomplishments can be viewed at: http://ars.fws.gov

The ARS has been used successfully for the past four years to support outreach and inreach efforts in Region 3. The system gathers information about Service accomplishments, activities and initiatives and organizes the information in an easy-to-use database. Information contained in ARS reports are used for media/congressional advisories and/or various information products. The on-line database allows managers to tie accomplishments to regional performance goals, national Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) goals as well as recognize the contributions of numerous conservation partners to the Service mission. The ARS helps keep the public and Service employees informed about resource accomplishments inside the region. The system can also report Service accomplishments to members of the news media and Congress in "real time".

The ARS was also upgraded this year to enhance user friendliness and data management. The upgraded features were accomplished by the contractor (Minnesota Computer Programming, Inc.) in coordination with External Affairs. The upgrade was completed and tested prior to the end of Fiscal Year 2000, but not implemented until mid-October 2000.

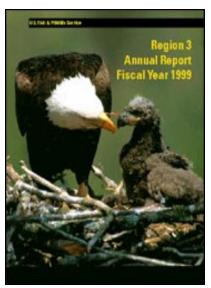
This year, the capabilities of ARS received attention outside the Region 3. Other federal agencies, the Army Corps Engineers, St. Louis District, U.S. Forest Service in Milwaukee, Wis., and U.S. Geological Survey Regional Office in Reston, Va., requested presentations and demonstrations of the system for use by their respective agencies.

The Midwest Natural Resources Group, a collection of 13 federal agencies operating in the Midwest, adopted the ARS during Fiscal Year 2000. The MNRG, initiated a "cloned" version of the Service's ARS to report Group accomplishments. The site is managed by the Region 3 External Affairs Office as part of its ongoing support to the Group. The U.S. Forest Service's Region 9 also adopted the ARS. Using the ARS programming architecture and files, the Forest Service named its version of the ARS, "Success Stories." In addition, Service Regions 5 and Region 2 made decisions to adopt the ARS. The regions sent representatives to Region 3 for training by the External Affairs' ARS Manager.

The ARS helped produce numerous information products during the



Informed Employees. The electronic newsletter "Inside Region 3," contains accomplishment report summaries and photos from throughout the region.



Annual Report. External Affairs published the Region 3 Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1999. The 500-page report included the year's accomplishments for both Region 3 programs and ecosystems.

year. The Fiscal Year 1999 Annual Report contained approximately 1,300 individual accomplishment reports detailing a wide array of field accomplishments. The Annual Report was published in March 2000. Because of its large size, the Annual Report was created in individual chapters and published in portable document format (pdf file format) to the Region 3 web site. A limited number of Annual Report summaries for both ecosystems and programs were also printed and distributed to the respective Programs and Ecosystem teams.

Inside Region 3, an electronic newsletter containing noteworthy items selected from the Accomplishment Reporting System, enjoyed increased popularity during the year. Field office staff demonstrated support for the newsletter through increased ARS submissions, and the forward of numerous photographs to support accomplishment report submissions. Ten issues of Inside Region 3 were published this year. Inside Region 3 is distributed via email to all employees in the Region. This year, at the Regional Director's direction, distribution was expanded to include all Service Regional Directors and Washington Office staff.

External Affairs supervised the renovation of the Regional Director's conference room during the year. External Affairs was responsible for renovation and improvements to the room's physical appearance, amenities and audio visual presentation capabilities. Specifically, External Affairs conceptualized, selected and coordinated installation of carpet, directional lighting, wallpaper, artwork, vertical blinds, and chairs. EA also coordinated the refinishing of the conference table and podium. Under a separate action, EA served as contract office representative for a contract to upgrade the audio-visual capabilities of the conference room. Aging AV equipment was removed during the room's remodeling. After investigating and exploring several audio visual solutions and vendors, EA joined contracting staff to work with a private consultant, who wrote design specifications and provided schematic drawings based on EA's concepts. EA also selected a local contractor, (Tierney Brothers) from three contractors who bid on the conference room. Installation of the AV equipment began in September. The RD conference room is now a 'state of the art' conference and presentation facility. Computer network connections and connection hubs are now installed at the conference table. Computer presentations (Powerpoint, Corel Presentations, etc.) can be given from the podium or at the table. The room also supports 35mm slide presentations, audio and video cassettes, DVD and a portable color document camera. All presentations can be recorded to video tape. The audio system was upgraded as well to include digital stereo surround sound with subwoofer:

Midwest Natural Resources Group

The Midwest Natural Resources Group (MNRG) is a collection of 13 federal agencies who have joined efforts to improve the natural resources of the Midwest. To better define their role, the MNRG has identified 12 focus areas to concentrate their efforts.

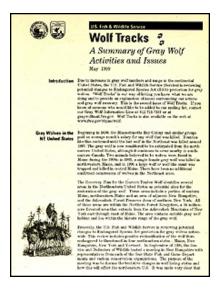


During Fiscal Year 2000, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3, took over as the lead coordinating agency for the Midwest Natural Resources Group (MNRG). The Region 3 External Affairs office was in charge of coordination and communications for the approximately 200 natural resource professionals who participated in the Group throughout the Midwest. Service activities included establishing a multi-agency Communications Sub-Committee; developing, organizing and maintaining a contact database for MNRG members; and, coordinating and hosting November and June MNRG Meetings and organizing the February MNRG Meeting.

The External Affairs Office developed and disseminated the following products: MNRG Charter; Operations Guide; draft Focus Area Map; Tribal Contacts for the MNRG; Focus Area Executive Summaries (and three updates); four MNRG Meeting Reports; Contact List by Membership; Contact List in Alphabetical order; 12 Focus Area Fact Sheets; Charge for Focus Areas; and Agendas for the Focus Area, Communications Sub-Committee, and Senior Leaders meetings. Additionally, the External Affairs manages and provides technical assistance for the MNRG Accomplishment Reporting System and manages five MNRG Contributed Fund Accounts.

The Region 3 Office of External Affairs is part of the MNRG Communications Sub-Committee and assists in developing products and process to help get the messages of the MNRG to our partners. To assist in this goal, External Affairs developed single page fact sheets for each focus area. These fact sheets highlight the background, activities, partners and on-the-ground projects of each focus area. The sheets are designed to be used in conjunction with the overall MNRG brochure to help MNRG members explain to partners and Congress how agencies are working together to benefit the natural resources of the Midwest.

On June 14, 2000, senior leaders of the seven federal agencies represented by the MNRG, signed an Intergovernmental Partnership Agreement to work in partnership with state and local governments, non-governmental organizations, private landowners and individuals to restore and protect the ecological integrity of the Illinois River Basin. Specifically, the MNRG decided to focus initial efforts on the Crow Creek watershed. The Region 3 Office of External Affairs, in coordination with the MNRG Communication Sub-Committee, assisted in the development of, and obtained signatures for, the Agreement, as well as coordinated a press conference, a site tour, notified local media and developed press packets. External Affairs personnel served as the MNRG Planning Committee Chair, with responsibility for hosting three MNRG meetings and coordination and communication between 200 natural resource professionals, representing 14 Federal agencies.



Wolf Tracks. Produced jointly by External Affairs and Ecological Services Offices, "Wolf Tracks" updates the public and interest groups on issues relating to the delisting of the gray wolf.

Public Affairs and Outreach Coordination

The outreach coordinator responsible for the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem worked with the consultation team from the Regional Office, Rock Island Field Office, Marion Suboffice and Twin Cities Field Office to develop an outreach strategy for release of the biological opinion resulting from Section 7 consultation with the Corps of Engineers. The consultation examined the effects of the operation and maintenance of the 9-foot navigation channel on the Upper Mississippi River on several listed species, including the pallid sturgeon, Higgins' eye pearly mussel, bald eagle, least tern, Indiana bat and decurrent false aster. Because jeopardy opinions for the pallid sturgeon and Higgins' eye were part of the final biological opinion, the need for outreach was a principal element in release of the opinion to the Corps. An initial outreach plan was developed by the outreach coordinator and revised and refined by the team as plans progressed. The outreach coordinator also drafted an initial press release and fact sheets, which were modified by the team as needed. The team conferred periodically to stay abreast of the attitudes of various stakeholders. including states, NGO's, members of Congress, the navigation industry, and the media. The final announcement was coordinated to release the opinion to the public via the website along with the Service's news release and background material. An article by the Washington Post just prior to the release of the opinion generated considerable media interest. The outreach coordinator handled numerous media inquiries, as did other team members upon release of the opinion. The field and regional office team members carried out elements of the outreach plan, such as conducting constituent and Congressional briefings.

The outreach coordinator responsible for the Upper Mississippi River ecosystem participated in the Service's efforts to develop a habitat needs assessment for the Upper Mississippi River under the Corps of Engineers' Environmental Management Program. The outreach coordinator served as chair of the Public Involvement Team, whose responsibility it was to ensure that development of the needs assessment included mechanisms for public input and review. The public involvement team consisted of members of state resource agencies, river resource groups, and other river stakeholders. The purpose of the team was to assess public attitude within the Upper Mississippi River Basin concerning existing, predicted future, and desired future conditions of the river over the next 50 years relative to fish and wildlife habitat. The outreach coordinator, as chair of the team, developed a scope of work to design a public involvement effort using focus groups to give the team the required public input into the effort. The resulting scope of work was submitted to the Corps of Engineers and awarded to a contracted consulting firm to conduct the focus group meetings in the summer of 2000 and prepare a final public involvement report which was included with the completed Habitat Needs Assessment.

The outreach coordinator responsible for the Lower Missouri River worked with the Regional Office and Columbia Missouri Field Office on outreach for the development of a biological opinion for the ongoing

Public Affairs and Outreach Coordination (continued)

Section 7 consultation with the Corps of Engineers on the operation of the Missouri River. While Region 6 has lead for the consultation, Region 3 is actively involved. Region 3 has been involved in providing input and comments on Region 6's outreach plan, as well as providing such Region 3 components as media and constituent contacts. The outreach coordinator will continue to serve as media contact for Region 3 inquiries concerning the consultation and work with Ecological Services colleagues in the regional and field offices, as well as outreach counterparts in Region 6.



External Affairs assisted Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge with the public information/participation portion of their Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) development process. The Office developed and disseminated several news releases clarifying information and ensuring the public was aware of upcoming informational meetings. External Affairs also served as the main media contact for the CCP and participated in six radio interviews, one television interview and three newspaper interviews. Other related activities included media packet development, additional media interviews and refuge staff assistance at two public information meetings. External Affairs continues to be part of the CCP Planning Team and will continue to provide assistance as the CCP moves forward.

The outreach coordinator responsible for the Mississippi River Headwaters ecosystem served as the national outreach lead on the gray wolf reclassification announcement, which was made by the Director on July 11. A national news release, national talking points, more than a dozen fact sheets and a national contact list were prepared and distributed to all other Service regions in preparation for the announcement. Additionally, arrangements were made for interviews with Service staff for numerous national media outlets, such as New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Detroit News, NBC Nightly News, and National Public Radio. The outreach coordinator also gave over 25 interviews to national and regional media representatives in the days following the announcement. Publicity for public information meetings was also coordinated by the outreach coordinator, who attended four Midwest meetings and handled media duties at each. Despite the controversy surrounding the issue and the national spotlight focused on Minnesota, the success of the announcement rollout stemmed from the careful work and coordination between our regional Endangered Species and External Affairs staffs.

The refuge outreach coordinator for accepted a Washington Office detail to assist with the development of the National Centennial Campaign, complementing similar work performed in the Region. Continued work on this project at the regional and local level have resulted in the passage of the National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Act, which was signed into law Nov. 2, 2000. Additionally, working with regional refuge managers, the outreach coordinator solicited names for and then selected one of the first Regional Refuge

Public Affairs and Outreach Coordination (continued)



--USFWS Photo by James R. Fisher Outreach Success. Service Director Jamie Rappaport Clark, Regional Director Bill Hartwig and Big Oaks NWR Manager Lee Herzberger talk with Indiana Congressman Baron Hill following ceremonies opening Big Oaks NWR in southern Indiana.

Centennial Teams in the nation, which will meet quarterly to advance Regional Centennial Projects. Region 3 also hosted the National Centennial Team in September for their bi-monthly meeting. As national coordinator of the Centennial Public Service Announcement Campaign, the outreach coordinator has spent considerable time obtaining commitments from celebrities, coordinating script development, scheduling Public Service Announcements, and exploring national distribution methods via the Ad Council.

The refuge outreach coordinator developed an outreach plan and strategy for the rollout of a new refuge proposal in northwestern Minnesota on June 26, 2000. This strategy, in coordination with The Nature Conservancy, resulted in favorable coverage from the area's largest daily newspaper which was later picked up by statewide newspapers. Subsequent feedback from local residents and elected representatives has remained remarkably positive, thanks both to the initial positive publicity and complementary messages from the Service and The Nature Conservancy.

External affairs also provided outreach and public affairs support to the opening of the Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge in July in southern Indiana. The 50,000-acre Big Oaks NWR was created on the Army's Jefferson Proving Ground, a former munitions testing site. Public affairs coordination was accomplished with several federal and state agencies, including the Department of Defence, U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, Indiana Congressional staffs, Indiana Army and Air National Guard as well as the Service's Washington Office. Media interviews, news releases and site visits were conducted by External Affairs and Big Oaks NWR staff in advance of the opening ceremonies July 8, 2000. Service Director Jamie Rappaport-Clark and Regional Director Bill Hartwig joined Army and Air Force dignitaries and Congressman Baron Hill to speak at the opening ceremony.

Region 3 has coordinated more Federal Duck Stamp Hometown events than any other Region in the country, the latest being the Millennium 2000 Duck Stamp of a mottled duck, won by Adam Grimm of Elyria Ohio. At age 21, Adam is the youngest winner in the Federal Duck Stamp Program's 66-year history. The Office of External Affairs brought together approximately twenty individuals from the private sector, conservation organizations, the state of Ohio, other Federal agencies, and Adam's entire extended family to form a Hometown Event Team, which hosted a day-long event at Adam's former high school on July 22, 2000. In addition to offering the local community an opportunity to celebrate Adam's success, the Team coordinated auctions and fund raising events which to date have raised \$15,000 for the Adam Grimm Habitat Restoration Project. When completed, the project will restore over 100 acres of wetlands and grasslands that will offer new opportunities for birding, hiking, nature photography and waterfowl hunting for the citizens of Ohio.

Public Affairs and Outreach Coordination (continued)



Duck Stamp Outreach. External affairs helped coordinate a duck stamp outreach event in Elyria, Ohio, hometown of Adam Grimm, the 2000 Duck Stamp artist. Fund raising events helped raise \$15,000 the the Adam Grimm Habitat Restoration Project.

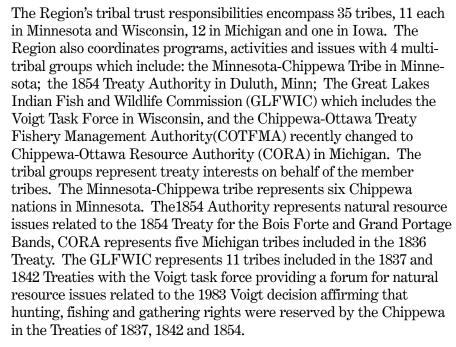
The Region's Office of External Affairs outreach coordinator for eastern states serves as Outreach Team Leader for a project that has potential to be the most visible conservation and endangered species recovery effort in the 21st century. Four Regions of the Service have joined with non-profit organizations, State agencies, and other Federal agencies to create the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership (WCEP). WCEP's goal is to reestablish a second wild migrating flock of whooping cranes in the eastern United States, a species whose low numbers (21 individual birds) in the 1940s have dramatically improved, but whose future survival is not yet assured. WCEP conducted an experiment during 1999 with the more abundant sandhill crane, raising and training a flock to follow ultralight aircraft between Necedah National Wildlife Refuge in central Wisconsin to Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge in central Florida. An on-the-road Service team coordinated media interviews, website updates and environmental education efforts during the six-week migration, the success of which is reflected by extensive media coverage in key United States and Canadian media, as well as overseas. Key messages were delivered by Director Clark and other WCEP partners. A partnership website that provided daily stories and maps tracing the team's progress, as well as links to partner sites, was used by media, school teachers and individuals as they followed the story throughout the seven state flyway. Partnerships were developed with outreach personnel in key states who are expected to directly participate and assist during subsequent experiments with whooping cranes. By avoiding urban areas in the migration, WCEP has the potential to effectively bring strong environmental messages to citizens of rural communities, which are key to long term recovery for countless species of plants and animals.

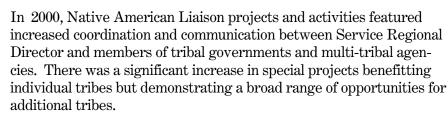
Region 3 has led the national communications effort for recovery and reclassification of the bald eagle since 1994, when the eagle was upgraded from endangered to threatened status. Through the team leader in the External Affairs Office, a coordinated effort to network with conservation organizations and private citizens to bring messages about the Endangered Species Act, recovery and partnerships has been sustained. The national team of 25 individuals have established a goal for using the bald eagle in environmental education efforts as well as the key to a national celebration when it is finally removed from the endangered species list. This is expected in the year 2001.

The airfield at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, is transformed for 10 days each summer into an 100-acre education and demonstration-oriented outdoor conference and airshow, drawing an estimated 785,000 aviation enthusiasts from all over the world. For the last three years, Region 3 has coordinated a large free-standing exhibit in the Federal Pavilion, hosted by the CAN AM Partnership, comprised of 16 federal Canadian and United States agencies that use aviation in the accomplishment of their mission. Through this venue, Region 3 has increased visibility of the Service's Aviation, Waterfowl Survey and Migratory Bird Programs. Service pilots from Region 2, 3 and 9, and field office supervisors and staff have actively participated in this

unique opportunity to reach a non-traditional audience. Region 3 is poised to enter into another three-year agreement with CAN AM, with exhibit themes on Horicon National Wildlife Refuge (2001), the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership (2002) and The Refuge Centennial (2003).

Native American Liaison





Endangered species issues involving the wolf, bald eagle, lynx, piping plover and other species were ongoing and increased as letters were sent to tribal governments providing the status of individual recovery efforts and explaining the opportunity for tribal input. As a result increased tribal input occurred to support requests for Service coordination and information. Tribal response to our letters was included in the formulation of appropriate endangered species documents and tribal representation at wolf informational meetings and hearings provided a substantial basis to determine tribal positions relative to the proposed rule.

During the past year Regional Director Hartwig met with the tribes in Minnesota and the 11 tribes represented by GLIFWC to obtain a list of tribal needs. Service tribal partnership received a boost as the planning session at Mystic Lake directly contributed to a new tribal partnership goal in the Service's strategic plan. Service Tribal Partnership was strengthened at the Conference of the Great Lakes Regional Native American Fish and Wildlife Society where the



--Photo by Joel Trick

Tribal Communication
External Affairs and Ecological
Services staff met with Native
American tribes to discuss status
of the gray wolf during public
information meetings in Ashland,
Wis., where tribes participated in
the outreach effort.

Native American Liaison (continued)



--USFWS Photo

Simulated Hunt. Young members of the Menominee Tribe in Wisconsin were introduced to hunting safety and ethics through use of the Service's Hunter Safety system.

Regional Director led a group of 11 Service attendees. Twenty two of the thirty three tribes had members attending the three day Conference hosted by the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin. Regional Director Hartwig honored the request of the conference organizers by presenting information on the international transportation of eagle parts and feathers by tribal members. Other presentations by Service personnel included: Ron Refsnider (RO/ES) - Wolf population status information and display; Mary Henson (Marquette SLC) - Monitoring Sea Lampreys in the Great Lakes; Mark Maskill (RO/FH) joining Mike Donofrio (Keweenaw Bay) - The Keweenaw Bay Fish Hatchery Isolation Partnership Project; Pam Dryer (Ashland FRO) joining Greg Fischer (Red Cliff) - Migratory Bird Surveys at Red Cliff through the use of Volunteers; Maureen Gallagher (Big Muddy NWR)- Workshop on Tools for Building Successful Partnerships; Steve Kufrin (RO/WH) -Workshop Presentation on Private Lands Partnerships and Cost Share Opportunities; and John Leonard (RO/EA) joining Adrian Miller (Menominee) - Demonstration of the laser DART system tool for Youth Hunter Safety Education.

Service coordination and partnerships with Tribal governments on natural resources increased. Tribal ecosystem maps were completed and distributed to Service field stations and tribes responded to the Service invitation to attend the ecosystem team meetings. Over 20 projects were conducted under the North American Wetland Conservation Act, challenge cost share and fish and wildlife assistance programs. While the tribal participation in each of these programs remains strong there was some reduction in the degree of tribal financial commitment.

Specific projects conducted at the request of individual tribes included: Review and coordination of Red Lake Nation Draft Integrated Resource Management Plan, coordination and demonstration of Federal Aid Hunter Safety system as part of the Menominee Nation youth tribal education, and coordination of a fishing event for inner city youths at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge as part of National Fishing Week. Twelve cooperative sponsors joined the Service for the fishing event which involved more than 160 inner city youths. The Saturday event introduced youths, ages 6 to 12, to recreational fishing and the environmental theme associated with the refuge. The young anglers were instructed in the "Pathway to Fishing" system by expert volunteers and were provided equipment to enable them to test their newfound knowledge against the wily fish in the refuge ponds. Contributions by the 1854 Authority, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and culinary efforts of the Red Lake Band fry crew and personnel from the Holiday Inn provided a shore lunch for the youth and over 50 fish day volunteers.

Strengthening our partnership with tribal organizations is a high priority and the "power of the press" is an excellent tool. Service activities relevant to tribal tradition and values are featured in articles

contained in Native American publications. For example, a "Ghost Shirt" article was coordinated and published in the Masinaigan and Eagle's Nest, a feature on the Federal Aid SAFETY youth hunter education system was also carried in several tribal publications. Many specific Tribal/Service fish and wildlife assistance projects, such as the fish health diagnostic activities provided by Service personnel on tribal hatcheries, also received press.

The Native American Liaison office provided support to vacant positions in the Washington Office and the Region, acting as the Service's National Native American Liaison for about one month.

Intergovernmental Affairs

During this past year over 1,000 congressional contacts were made, congressional tours were provided in every state, Capitol Hill briefings were conducted, and briefings were provided for the Vice President and the Secretary of the Interior. All 107 field offices were provided current congressional contact information, 24 pieces of legislation that may effect the Region were tracked and 14 laws were researched.

Congressional outreach plans were developed for the proposed Glacial Ridge NWR, Crab Orchard NWR, proposed Minnesota Valley NWR expansion, Missouri River Section 7, and the Kankakee NWR outreach plan was updated. Congressional outreach plans were implemented for the Canada lynx, gray wolf, bald eagle, piping plover, Upper Mississippi River Section 7, and the Missouri River Section 7.

Whooping Crane Congressional Outreach Plan was developed and a total of 240 Congressional offices representing 20 states were informed of progress being made to reestablish a migratory flock of whooping cranes in the eastern U.S.

External Affairs staff served as the MNRG Planning Committee Chair, with responsibility for hosting three Group meetings and coordination and communication between 200 natural resource professionals, representing 14 federal agencies.

Interactive Media

The entire Region 3 Website was recognized by the Association for Conservation Information (ACI) for being accessible for those with visual and hearing disabilities. External Affairs' Web Manager managed the production and development of websites with embedded coding that allows reader software to interpret Internet pages for access by those with disabilities, a first for the Fish and Wildlife Service and the first in Interior to meet the Section 508 standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Region's website has grown to over 2,700 individual webpages.

External Affairs managed and directed an effort to make the Region's website first in the Service as a two-way communications tool for people to access and provide formal comments on items such as EA's, Draft Recovery Plans, NRDA reports, and EIS's. These documents

are often provided in PDF format for online review and include e-mail contact links that encourage Service customers to provide input. In the example of NRDA materials, reports are being downloaded at a pace of 2,000 reports per month. This saves in administrative efforts to mail copies and simplifies the review for the public so they don't have to purchase reports or make a special trip to a reading room to review items of interest.

External Affairs Office was responsible for the development of more than 1,500 accessible webpages which more than doubled the size of the Region's website from around 1,200 pages to over 2,700 now online. Review of all pages to insure they met regional and national policy considerations, website production, training and guidance to field offices, marketing strategy guidance, and overseeing the production of various contractors around the region.

Regional External Affairs produced the first Internet/Intranet outreach plan in the Service. The plan provides an outline for future development of the website, identifies target audiences, and remains a living document to keep pace with the rapidly changing technologies we can tap into to better serve our online customers.

The Region's External Affairs Office serves as Chair of the Public Affairs Committee for the Twin Cities Federal Executive Board. Activities this past year include a very successful media breakfast hosted by the VA and included members of the media to provide Public Affairs professionals and interested managers the opportunity to hear from media members how we can improve our chances of getting activities covered by local media.

Training and Conflict Resolution

On July 1, 2000, Region 3 joined all other U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regions and all Department of Interior Agencies by offering CORE services to all employees. CORE uses alternative dispute resolution (ADR) techniques to resolve workplace disputes at the earliest opportunity and at the lowest organizational level. CORE increases communication and reduces destructive conflict. This is a new program for Region 3 employees to protect against abuse, bias, and other improper treatment or unfairness. It assists employees in a confidential, expedient manner to work the issues together to find an equitable solution. Two CORE Specialists, including one External Affairs staff member, were trained in Region 3. Employees and managers are using the CORE program more and more, as it is able to quickly respond to workplace conflict issues prior to taking them to a higher level.

Region 3 maintained strong support for its employees in continuing education by fostering the 40 hour per year training requirement for each employee. The Region's External Affairs Office presented over 38 Distance Learning programs. Over 642 Region 3 employees attended the National Conservation Training Center and numerous

Training and Conflict Resolution (continued)

others attended non-government training programs. Region 3 remains very active in the federal training community by co-chairing the "Inter-Agency Training Council." This council presents high quality "on time" training for all federal agencies while making the courses extremely cost effective.

External Affairs took a very active role in the $62^{\rm nd}$ Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference - partnering with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the University of Minnesota. Every 10 years Minnesota hosts this conference, and this year External Affairs actively participated in hosting the registration portion of the conference.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001

The Region's External Affairs Office will support National, Regional and field office mission and priorities through the delivery of quality communications in a variety of print, video and electronic media; strengthen its liaison with Native American representatives; serve as a clearinghouse on current legislative issues; through interactive technology maintain capabilities to report and market Service accomplishments; and, provide training opportunities for a knowledgeable and current workforce.

Annual Work Plan

In keeping with this mission, External Affairs will strengthen its commitment with implementation of the following Annual Work Plan:

Overall

Support Service and Regional mission and priorities through the delivery of quality communications in order to position the Service in the Great Lakes-Big Rivers Region as the recognized Federal leader regarding fish and wildlife issues. These communications will focus on the Director's priorities, Regional Director's priorities and ecosystem team priorities; legislative and congressional, Native American and Regional workforce training issues; Law Enforcement, Federal Aid and resource programs' media issues; Service identification and integrated marketing in its outreach delivery and products; interactive technology (especially accomplishment reporting and marketing); partnerships; and in-reach (that serves to enhance outreach, retention and employee morale).

Field Issues

Outreach Coordinators and other External Affairs staff will serve to strengthen ties with field offices, strengthen field office (including ecosystem team) outreach capabilities, strengthen recognition of field offices' accomplishments, clarify and promote field office outreach priorities, and facilitate communication with partners.

Work Teams

Build effective and harmonious work teams (including Regional Outreach Team comprised of both regional office and field office employees) in the Regional Office which support pro-active, unified outreach and in-reach.

Realignment

Restructure roles and responsibilities and workload among External Affairs Office personnel to efficiently and effectively complete priority work assignments and exploiting new ways of doing business.

Communication and Training

Improve the effectiveness of outreach and in-reach communications and training opportunities Region wide; implement increasingly effective communication methods and workforce training; support all training and communications Region wide, especially among programs, ecosystems and geographic areas.

Planning

Use the Annual Work Plan to prioritize work for the Office of External Affairs for the coming year. Develop a pro-active strategic plan to use as a guide for evolving the External Affairs Office of the future.

Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report

Region 3



Program Description and Mission

The Division of Migratory Birds and State Programs was established by the Service during Fiscal Year 2000. The division merges two pre-existing programs: Federal Aid, and Migratory Birds, formerly a part of the Refuges and Wildlife program. Migratory Birds and State Programs oversees such migratory bird conservation functions as the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, Partners in Flight for nongame birds, population and habitat surveys for migratory species, and a permit program for birds of federal responsibility.

The goals of the migratory bird management program are to maintain and enhance migratory bird populations and habitats, and to provide people with opportunities to learn about and enjoy these species. The Service enforces the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (protecting bird populations from overexploitation), coordinates and conducts bird surveys, bands birds, supports research, sets hunting regulations, issues permits for the take of certain birds, and protects and restores migratory bird habitats.

Approximately 1,000 species of birds occur in the United States. About 450 species are found in the Upper Midwest; 48 of these are game birds (waterfowl, rails, woodcock, snipe and mourning doves), while the remainder are nongame species. Forty-three species (10 percent) are of concern to the Service because they are rare or declining. These and other species of special interest

Description and Mission (continued)

are listed in the Service's Fish and Wildlife Resource Conservation Priorities document.

The division also administers the Federal Aid program, an important grant program which provided \$89.8 million to state conservation departments within the region during Fiscal Year 2000. Federal Aid works with state fish and wildlife agencies in mutually responsible, cooperative and creative grant partnership to protect and enhance fish, wildlife and habitat resources for present and future public benefit.

The major grant programs, Sport Fish Restoration and Wildlife Restoration, are recognized nationwide for the positive impacts they have had on the quality of habitat and species management and the efficiency of program administration.

Other grant management programs administered by Federal Aid are the: Coast Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act; Anadromous Fish Conservation Act (currently inactive); Partnerships for Wildlife Program; Section 5 of the Endangered species Act; and Clean Vessel Act and Boating Infrastructure Grant Program. While these grant programs are smaller in terms of dollars, they are major contributors to providing benefits to our fish and wildlife resources.

Summary of Fiscal Year 2000 Accomplishments

Migratory Birds

Bird conservation was taken to a higher level in 2000 when Region 3's Division of Migratory Birds and the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) Joint Venture Office took a leadership role in the development of several nongame bird conservation plans to complement the NAWMP. The Upper Mississippi Valley/Great Lakes Shorebird Conservation Plan, which is a component of the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, was completed, initial planning was undertaken for regional components of the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, and input was provided on several Partners in Flight landbird conservation plans. The Division's Habitat and Population Evaluation Team digitized data for a Geographic Information System that will be used to identify important habitat for grassland songbirds in the Prairie Pothole Region and overlay this with maps of priority waterfowl habitat to highlight focus areas for multi-species bird conservation.

In Fiscal Year 2000, the Region's Migratory Bird program provided \$483,000 for 51 nongame bird monitoring, research, habitat management, and education projects, including 27 done on national wildlife refuges. Funding was also provided for research and management projects relating to Canada geese, duck nesting success, woodcock, ingestion of spent shot pellets by ducks in the Mississippi Flyway, lesser scaup, GIS mapping of upland cover in the Prairie Pothole Region of Minnesota and Iowa, and for

wetland management.

At the national level, the Division played a major role in addressing the management of double-crested cormorants, including coordinating three public scoping meetings for the cormorant Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), contributing papers to a symposium on cormorant biology and management, funding research on cormorant-fisheries relationships, and coordinating the preparation of a rangewide cormorant status assessment and 3 Great Lakes cormorant fact sheets. A comprehensive, rangewide status assessment on the cerulean warbler, a species of high national and regional concern, was completed in 2000 and distributed to partners throughout North America.

Field work was completed for a three-year survey of colonial waterbirds in the U. S. Great Lakes and data from this effort are now being combined with land ownership information to identify important waterbird colonies in need of protection. Migratory Birds biologists conducted the "ground" portion of the annual breeding waterfowl survey in Minnesota, and coordination was furnished for the Woodcock Singing Grounds Survey, the Mourning Dove Call Count Survey, and the mid-winter waterfowl survey. The Habitat and Population Evaluation Team (HAPET) produced duck breeding population and production estimates and completed breeding duck density distribution maps (thunderstorm maps) for all Region 3 Wetland Management Districts. HAPET also conducted a duck nesting success study in western Minnesota in cooperation with the Minnesota Waterfowl Association.

Region 3 Migratory Birds Permits staff was instrumental in the on-going development and implementation of the new Servicewide Permit Issuance and Tracking System.

The Migratory Game Bird program partnered with several states, U.S. Geological Survey Biological Resources Division (USGS-BRD), Illinois Natural History Survey, the Wildlife Management Institute, Minnesota Waterfowl Association, other nongovernmental organizations, universities, Canadian Provinces of Ontario and Manitoba, the Mississippi Flyway Council, the Division of Migratory Bird Management, and other Service offices to conduct surveys, research, management, and outreach for migratory birds.

Joint Venture

The Joint Venture Office in Region 3 is responsible for implementing the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) in the eastern Prairie Pothole Joint Venture (Iowa and Minnesota), and in the Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Joint Venture (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas,

Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin). The objectives of the NAWMP include protection, restoration, and enhancement of wetlands and associated upland habitats to improve conditions for breeding and migrating birds, particularly waterfowl.

The mission of the Joint Venture Office is to work with Service and non-Service partners, combining resources and strategies to achieve the habitat objectives mentioned above. Our activities are prioritized through Joint Venture Implementation Plans, Ecosystem Team prioritization exercises, and frequent state steering committee meetings of project partners. In addition, we work with the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant programs, which are open to all and favor projects with multiple partnerships and resource values.

In Fiscal Year 2000, the Joint Venture Office provided \$200,000 to Service field stations for NAWMP projects on Service lands, as well as on private lands, in both Joint Ventures. The Joint Venture contribution was matched by partner contributions totaling \$285,000. These projects resulted in the restoration of 1,000 acres of wetlands and the restoration or enhancement of 3,500 acres of grasslands. We also supported youth educational activities, GIS mapping of grasslands in the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, and research projects to look at Bird Conservation Areas in Minnesota and mallard productivity in Wisconsin.

Region 3 partners were very successful in competing for Fiscal Year 2000, NAWCA grants. Fourteen projects were awarded NAWCA grants, for a total of \$6.6 million in new federal project money. This amount was matched by partner contributions of \$35 million. The projects will take place in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin. Resource accomplishments will include 29,000 acres of wetlands and associated uplands protected; 11,000 acres restored; and 11,000 acres enhanced. The Joint Venture Office provides advice and technical assistance to Service and non-Service partners applying for these grants.

In Fiscal 2001, the goal of the Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Joint Venture will be to begin implementation of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI). This will involve securing and improving habitat for a variety of bird species covered by national and international plans, including shorebirds, land birds, and colonial waterbirds, in coordination with the continuing habitat work for waterfowl on behalf of the NAWMP. The Joint Venture Management Board will engage in multi-species mapping efforts and project prioritization as we embark on this expanded mission to be the habitat improvement arm of the NABCI.

State Successes

Federal Aid

Audits

Audits of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Aid Grants to Region 3 States was a major activity during Fiscal Year 2000. This included pre-audit preparation, over-all audit coordination, assistance provided to the Defense Contract Auditing Agency (DCAA) and the States during audit field work, and audit resolution. Staff also conducted programmatic reviews in response to audit findings and served on a national audit policy implementation team.

Illinois

Coordination activities with the Defense Contract Auditing Agency (DCAA) were maintained throughout the year. Field work for the Fiscal Year 1996 and 1997 Illinois audit has been completed and a final audit report from OIG is scheduled for December 2000. The Region completed a programmatic review and issued a final report on field trials and put and take shooting activities at Green River State Wildlife Area in October 1998 in response to concerns identified in the draft audit report. There were major findings of noncompliance with Federal laws, regulations, and grant provisions that resulted in significant corrective actions. Coordination and monitoring of corrective actions has continued during the year. Benefits of these actions have been increased hunting opportunities, increased use of the area by school children for conservation education and nature study. increased habitat restoration activities for unique prairie wetland habitats, and improved conditions for both game and nongame wildlife.

Indiana

A final audit report for Fiscal Years 1994, 1995 and 1996 was completed. Final resolution of audit findings, completion of a corrective action plan, and testing and acceptance of the new accounting system for the Division of Fish and Wildlife was completed in December 1999. The new accounting system will provide for adequate tracking, internal control, and reporting for Federal Aid grant funds and represents a major benefit of this audit.

In March 2000, the Region started a programmatic review of field trials at Indiana Fish and Wildlife Management Areas as follow up to an audit finding and resolution. A draft report was issued in September 2000 and a final report is scheduled for November 2000.

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Audit resolution for Fiscal Years 1995 and 1996 was completed in Fiscal Year 1999. Questioned costs of \$723,257 were resolved with implementation of an installment repayment plan. The second of three installment payments was made to the Iowa DNR Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund on schedule in July 2000.

Michigan

Extensive communication and coordination activities were ongoing throughout the year with Michigan DNR administrators and DCAA auditors for the purpose of obtaining audit information

and achieving early resolution of audit issues. A draft audit report for Fiscal Year 1996 and Fiscal Year 1997 was issued by DCAA in April 2000 and an audit close out meeting with the Michigan DNR and DCAA was attended in June 2000. In August 2000 further meetings were held with Michigan DNR and DCAA to obtain additional audit information and achieve resolution of audit issues identified in the draft report. These meetings led to re-opening of field work for the audit to examine previously unavailable information that was determined to be pertinent to one of the major issues identified in the draft report.

Minnesota

Staff completed preliminary audit work for audit of Fiscal Years 1998 and 1999 grants. The audit was initiated with the audit entrance conference in April 2000. Field work is on schedule. In August 2000, staff participated in site visits. This included interviews of various fish and wildlife program staff and law enforcement staff plus reviews of several fish hatcheries, fisheries lands, and wildlife management areas throughout the state. Coordination activities with DCAA and the DNR were ongoing throughout the year.

Missouri

Staff completed preliminary audit work for audit of Fiscal Year 1998 and Fiscal Year 1999 grants. The audit was initiated with the audit entrance conference in February 2000. Field work is on schedule. In June 2000, staff participated in site visits. This included interviews of various fish, wildlife, and forestry program staff plus reviews of fisheries lands, wildlife management areas, and boating access sites throughout the state. Extensive communication and coordination activities with DCAA and the Department of Conservation were ongoing throughout the year.

Staff served on this national team which drafted six chapters for inclusion in the Fish and Wildlife Service Handbook to establish audit policy and address problems associated with the Federal Aid Audit Program. Chapter titles are: 1) Policy, Responsibilities, and Scope for Grantee Audits; 2) Scoping of Grantee Audits; 3) Planning for Grantee Audits; 4)Conducting and Reporting on Grantee Audits; 5) Audit Resolution; and 6) Audit-Related Appeals.

Grant Activities

States use Federal Aid grants for work across the full spectrum of their management responsibilities. Grants account for one-fourth to one-half of the states' fish and wildlife management budgets. In Fiscal Year 2000, restoration grants for the eight states of Region 3 totaled \$89,814,204–\$39.8 million in Wildlife Restoration grant funds and more than \$50 million in Sport Fish Restoration grant funds. Region 3 states garner approximately 21 percent of these grant funds apportioned nationally.

Partnerships for Wildlife Program

Region 3 was again successful with projects selected for funding under the Partnerships for Wildlife Program. In Fiscal Year 2000, there was \$764,200 available for funding from which 33 projects were selected nationwide. Of this 33 projects selected, 13 were from Region 3 for a total of \$302,535. This is nearly half of total funding available. Some of the projects selected in Region 3 included a yellow-headed blackbird study in Illinois, a bat study in Wisconsin, grassland bird surveys and studies in Missouri and Wisconsin, prairie chicken management in Wisconsin, and prairie insect distribution in a six state area.

Hunter Education

Wisconsin DNR hosted its First Hunter Education Instructor Academy with two goals in mind: deliver a curriculum on how instructors can better maximize their efforts and minimize their time, but still product a quality student, and demonstrate how to deliver a hunter education program with a hands-on approach. A total of 50 instructors were trained during this very successful two-day session. Federal Aid provided training about the Wildlife Restoration Program. Other topics covered included instructor liability, shooting positions, zones of fire, ethics and responsibility, tree stand safety, and bow hunting. This course was primarily all hands-on with very little lecture. Feedback from the instructors regarding this teaching method were very favorable.

Realty Reviews

Iowa and Minnesota realty reviews were conducted in Fiscal Year 2000. Post Award Compliance Review was accomplished in Michigan.

Outreach

The Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) program has distributed more than \$4 billion to states nationally. The dollars are used to further recreational fishing and boating opportunities. Over the past 10 years, 3.8 billion fish have been stocked, fishing and aquatic ecology education classes were provided to 4.7 million students, research projects were financed to aid fish management, 1,700 new boat access areas were constructed along with 3,300 new fishing access sites.

Indiana State Fair

What would the Federal Aid program have in common with the Indiana State Fair? The Sport Fish Restoration Program funded the enhancements to the aquariums at the DNR State Fair facility along with developing kiosks that inform and educate the state fair participant about aquatic ecology and the SFR program. This was an opportunity to reach thousands interested in their fisheries program within their state. Federal Aid was a part of a grand opening to recognize the changes and how SFR was a part of reaching anglers about their contributions to aquatic education.

Cabela's

Retail stores and the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration programs have common customers—those buying excise taxed items. Federal Aid placed program information on the end of the aisles in the Cabela's store in Owatanna, Minn. "Cycle of Success" literature illustrated how the purchase of ammunition, guns, and tackle, rods and reels are working to benefit the hunter and angler. Federal Aid was also a part of the Spring and Fall Expo's held in the Owatanna store. The staff was also invited to provide information and education about the programs to Cabela's product specialists. Federal Aid currently has signs in the aquarium area regarding the Sport Fish Restoration program that reaches thousands of visitors to Cabela's stores in Owatanna and Michigan.

Bass Pro

Working with the corporate sales and promotions manager at Bass Pro, Federal Aid has started discussions on how best to put the Sport Fish Restoration and Wildlife Restoration program in front of anglers and hunters who visit the Bass Pro website and retail outlets. Through our ongoing dialogue and commitment from Bass Pro, we have been a part of a new Wonders of Wildlife museum being built in Springfield, Mo.. The museum is dedicated to hunters and anglers. Co-chairpersons for the non-profit effort are past President's George Bush and Jimmy Carter. Federal Aid information will be included in kiosks within the museum with an individual area to be developed later dedicated to the programs.

Regional Efforts

Federal Aid, working with External Affairs, developed an "Inside Region 3 Special Edition" dedicated to informing and educating staff regarding the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program. It covers not only how the program works but specific examples within each state on successes and it includes pictures. In addition Federal Aid has developed and designed a new website which will provide an additional outreach tool to reach the public interested in the Federal Aid program and can be found at www.fws.gov/r3pao/fed_aid.

Federal Aid has also been a part of a National Outreach Team for Federal Aid. Region 3 was responsible for coordinating and developing a tackle manufacturer initiative focused on reaching the product packager. As part of this effort, Federal Aid personnel staffed a booth at the 2000 ICAST (International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades) Show, July 19-23, 2000, at McCormick Place, Chicago. Communications objectives included:

- Recognize that the Sport Fish Restoration Program is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Associate the Sport Fish Restoration logo with accomplishments and benefits of the Sport Fish Restoration program.





 $\bullet\,$ Identify the industry's role in the Sport Fish Restoration Program

With 383 exhibitors and over 1,800 booths, this show offers this initiative potential to reach our goal of increasing the Sport Fish Restoration logo on tackle product packaging.



-USFWS Photo by Chuck Traxler

 $\label{likelihood} The \textit{Wildlife Restoration Grant is one of two major grant programs administered by the \textit{Division of Federal Aid}.}$

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001

• Provide leadership in integrating and implementing migratory bird management throughout the Region.

Migratory Birds

- Coordinate the development of the Upper Mississippi Valley/ Great Lakes Waterbird Conservation Plan.
- Participate in updating the Service's list of nongame birds of conservation concern and revise the Region 3 Resource Conservation Priorities document to be consistent with the national list.
- Participate in national efforts to develop Memoranda of Understanding with other federal agaencies as directed by the Executive Order on Migratory Bird Conservation.
- Continue to assist in the standardization of migratory bird permitting activities across the country.

Federal Aid

- Improve our grant process and completion of them in a timely manner.
- Work towards implementation of the Federal Aid Information Management System.

Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report

Region 3



--USFWS Photo

Paddlefish. Biologist Joel Trick holds this rare and declining species.

Program Description and Mission

The Region 3 Fisheries Program focuses on a broad range of aquatic resource management and aquatic habitat conservation issues, opportunities and partnerships in an eight-state area encompassing 450,000 square miles with a population of over 54 million people. Primary deepwater aquatic resource features include four of the Great Lakes and connecting waters including the St. Mary's River and Detroit River - Lake St. Clair system, and most of the upper Mississippi River Basin, including portions of the Missouri and Ohio Rivers.

National Fish
Hatcheries in Region
3 produced more
than 23 million fish
(700,000 pounds) and
55 million eggs
during Fiscal Year
2000.

The mission of the Service's Fishery Program is to provide the leadership to conserve, restore and enhance aquatic ecosystems and perpetuate their many benefits for future generations. The Fishery Program operates with several national priorities: restoration and management of interjurisdictional fisheries and habitats; recovery of threatened and endangered species; recovery of candidate species; fulfillment of Federal mitigation obligations; and providing technical assistance on Service lands and to Native American Governments.

There are 16 fisheries field stations in Region 3: five national fish hatcheries (NFH); six fishery resources offices (FRO); two fishery coordination offices; two sea lamprey control biological stations; and one fish health center.

National Fish Hatcheries

National Fish Hatcheries in Region 3 develop and maintain brood stocks of selected fish strains, provide technical assistance and sources of fish and eggs to cooperating agencies in pursuit of their aquatic resource management goals, provide fish and eggs for research purposes, stock fish and eggs as part of native fish restoration programs, stock fish in fulfillment of Federal mitigation obligations, and provide refugia for native freshwater mussels.

Fishery Resources Offices



--Photo by David Radloff

Assisting Tribes. The Service
provides assistance and hatchery
stock to tribal hatcheries in supportof
Native American fishery restoration.
This brook trout was one of 280
provided to the LacVieux Desert
Indian Reservation in Michigan.

Fishery Resources Offices perform key monitoring and control activities related to invasive aquatic species, survey and evaluate native fish stocks and aquatic habitats to identify restoration opportunities, play a key role in targeting and implementing native fish and habitat restoration programs, work with private land owners, states, local governments and watershed organizations to complete aquatic habitat restoration projects under the Service's Private Lands program, provide coordination and technical assistance toward the management of interjurisdictional fisheries, maintain and operate several key interagency databases, provide technical assistance to other Service programs addressing contaminants, endangered species, Federal project review and hydropower operation and relicensing, evaluate and manage fisheries on Service lands, and provide technical support to 38 Native American tribal governments and treaty authorities.

Fishery Coordination Offices

Fishery Coordination Offices provide crucial facilitation and interagency coordination functions affecting the management of native fishes and aquatic habitats working both independently and through organizations such as the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) and the Great lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission (GLIFWC).

Sea Lamprey Control Stations

Sea Lamprey Control Stations implement sea lamprey population assessment and control activities throughout the Great Lakes in a program administered through the State Department and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission.

The Fish Health Center

The Fish Health Center provides specialized fish health evaluation and diagnostic services to Federal, state, tribal, and private hatcheries in Region 3, conducts extensive monitoring and evaluation of the health status of wild fish stocks throughout Region 3, examines and certifies the health of fish taken from wild stocks for addition to captive brood stocks, and performs a wide range of special services helping to interface the National Fish Hatcheries, Fishery Resources Offices, Fish Technology Centers and outside organizations such as the U.S. Geological Survey providing technical input to the Service's Fishery Program.

Summary of Fiscal Year **2000** Accomplishments

Native Fish Restoration



--Photo by David Radloff **Restoring Native Fish.** National

fish hatcheiries in Region 3 help
support restoration of native brook
trout and lake trout in the Great
Lakes.

The Fishery Program's leadership role in restoration of nationally significant native fish stocks continued during 2000. Personnel focused on expansion of self-sustaining lake trout in Lake Superior and efforts to establish self-sustaining populations in Lakes Michigan and Huron. Lake sturgeon restoration activities continued in Lake Superior, Green Bay of Lake Huron, and the lake Huron - Detroit River - Lake St. Clair - lake Erie areas. Lake sturgeon activities on the Detroit River were initiated to describe habitat use patterns and identify spawning habitats. Native brook trout restoration activities continued in Lake Superior with further evaluation of the status and restoration potential in northern Lake Huron. Paddlefish restoration work also continued, with more fish coded-wire tagged, additional radiotelemetry studies in the Mississippi, Illinois, Wisconsin and Chippewa Rivers, fingerling stocking in the Upper Mississippi River, Lower Missouri River and Arkansas-Red River Ecosystems, and full operation of the Mississippi River Tagging Center under agreement with MICRA and its 28 member states.

Fish and Mussel Production and Stocking

We continued to operate five National Fish Hatcheries producing 15 species of fish and one species of freshwater mussel as part of 132 propagation programs serving Region 3 waters. Region 3 facilities produced over 23 million fish (700,000 pounds) and 55 million eggs during 2000. Our Great Lakes stations produced and stocked over 4 million yearling lake trout as part of restoration programs in Lakes Superior, Michigan, and Huron. Our Iron River, Wisconsin and Hiawatha Forest, Michigan facilities continued to manage extensive lake trout brood stocks. Isolation of fish taken from wild lake trout and brook trout stocks continued at Genoa NFH, Wisconsin. The Genoa NFH initiated development of a captive propagation program for the federally endangered Higgins' eye pearlymussel in response to increasing displacement of native mussels within the St Croix River system.

Sea Lamprey Control

The Service's Sea Lamprey Control Program, administered through the State Department and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC), is presented in detail in a bi-national annual report to the GLFC. Highlights for 2000 include the continued aggressive control measures for sea lamprey; assessment of adult and juvenile sea lamprey populations in tributaries and offshore areas in the Great Lakes; treatments for control of sea lamprey in many other Great Lakes streams and the release of sterile male sea lampreys for control purposes continued.

Invasive Aquatic Species Control



--Photo by Lloyd DeGrange

Round Goby. The Fisheries program is part of a multi-agency effort to control the spread of invasive species such as the Round Goby.

Our fisheries stations continued to survey Eurasian ruffe and round goby populations throughout the upper Great lakes and to develop and implement control measures. The stage is now set for the installation of an invasive species barrier in the Chicago Waterways in an attempt to stop the spread of harmful species from Great Lakes waters into the Mississippi River Basin; the multi agency round goby sampling program, organized and led by our La Crosse Fisheries Resource Office, continued in 2000. We continued our efforts with the U.S. Coast Guard in managing ballast water exchange in the Great Lakes to eliminate the introduction of new exotic species. Staff continued to monitor the spread of zebra mussel within Region 3, and associated impacts to native mussels. Each of our four large rivers stations continued involvement in surveying the occurrence of Asian carp in the Mississippi River Basin, with heightened concern for the potential introduction of black carp due to an increased interest in producing this species by commercial fish farmers.

Fish Health Operations

The LaCrosse (Wis.) Fish Health Center continued its work in evaluating fish health case histories for our national fish hatchery system. The Center collected and examined feral fish from throughout the region for diseases of concern as part of the ongoing national wild fish health survey. The Center also continued their role in conducting training courses to students from federal, state, tribal and commercial agencies, universities and members of the public. The Center continued ongoing efforts to monitor the health status of brood stock and production fish at five National Fish Hatcheries in region 3 and to ensure disease free status of wild fish transferred to Region 3 Hatcheries for addition to brood stocks.

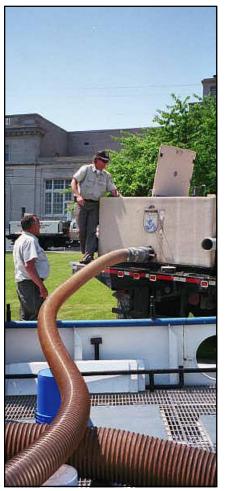
Private Lands and Watershed Restoration

Fishery Resources Office staff at Ashland and LaCrosse, Wisconsin, Alpena, Michigan and Carterville, Illinois lead watershed restoration projects on riverine systems throughout region 3. Our Ashland FRO was instrumental in establishing the Lake Superior Coastal Wetlands Initiative and continued invovlement in the establishment and management of the Whittelesey Creek NWR in northern Wisconsin, as well as overseeing establishment of the Coastal program in the Lake Superior watershed.

Fish Passage

The Alpena Fishery Resources Office conducted fish passage activities in Western Lake Erie coastal wetlands and the Sandusky River. The Ballville Dam, located on the Sanduskey River in Fremont, Ohio, has been proposed for removal and would restore access to 22 miles of spawning habitats for walleye and lake sturgeon. The Columbia Fishery Resources Office conducted a fish passage project in Western Iowa involving approximately 448 bridge crossings on Missouri River tributary streams thought to be functioning as barriers to native fish.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001



-USFWS Photo by Robert Pos Region 3 Fishery staff move hatchery produced stocks aboard the Regions vessel M/V Togue for stocking in the Great Lakes.

Support and achieve national fishery program priorities conducted in this region including: restoration and management of interjurisdictional fisheries and aquatic ecosystems; recovery of listed aquatic species; restoring depleted fish populations to preclude listing; providing technical assistance on Service lands and to Native American tribal governments; and fulfilling Federal mitigation responsibilities.

Conceptualize and develop, to the Washington Office, fishery activities and initiatives that support intra-program, inter-agency, state, tribal, and public partnership efforts promoting national fishery priorities and aquatic conservation leadership.

Maintain Hatchery, Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance, Sea Lamprey Control, and Fish Health programmatic continuity, connectivity and technical capability across the Region.

Seek to strengthen existing internal resources and external partnerships, to more effectively address fish and wildlife conservation efforts, especially the priority aquatic species of concern in Region 3.

Market our fishery program products and accomplishments, issues and opportunities, and budget initiatives directly to and in support of National aquatic priorities.

Support the Regional Director, Fishery Field Stations, Special Assistant to Ecosystems and Region 3 Ecosystem Teams in pursuing resource conservation priorities identified by Region 3.

Maintain, monitor and support Regional information systems including: Fishery Maintenance Management, Construction and Fishery Information Systems and associated databases.

Increase partnerships with other regional office programs especially Ecological Services and Refuges and Wildlife.

Provide the leadership to conserve, restore and enhance aquatic ecosystems and perpetuate their many benefits for future generations.

- Mission of the Fisheries Program

Fisheries

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Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report

Region 3

Inspection Mission.

The Region's wildlife inspectors monitor the legal trade and intercept illegal importations and exportations of federally protected fish and wildlife. Uniformed wildlife inspectors are located at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago, and at the border ports of Detroit, Mich. and Minneapolis, Minn.



--USFWS Photo

Program Description and Mission

The Law Enforcement Program in Region 3 is comprised of 23 Special Agents, nine Wildlife Inspectors, and essential support staff located at the Service's Regional Office at Fort Snelling, Minn.. Law Enforcement field offices are located in each of eight states within Region 3. Wildlife inspectors serve the border ports of Detroit, Port Huron and Sault Sainte Marie, Mich., and Minneapolis/St. Paul, Grand Portage and International Falls, Minn. Inspectors are also stationed at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago.

The broad mission of the enforcement program is to protect foreign and native wildlife - both on and off Service lands - through the application of an assortment of federal wildlife laws, as well as other federal statutes relating to smuggling, conspiracy, and money laundering. These laws include: Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, Lacey Act and the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act The application and enforcement of these and other laws is essential to effectively countering the illegal trade in wildlife, which, at the international level is estimated to be the second largest form of black market commerce in the world - second only to drug trafficking.

Summary of Fiscal Year 1999 Accomplishments

On October 20, 2000, public ceremonies were held in Davenport, Iowa, celebrating the restoration efforts of the Nahant Marsh. These marshlands first came to the attention of a Service agent and Iowa State Conservation Officer in 1994, when they received information that a skeet and trap shooting range was operating in proximity to the marsh, and that large amounts of lead shot were being deposited into the wetlands as a result of the shooting activities at the range. An investigation documented migratory bird mortality associated with lead poisoning as a result of the gun club's shooting activities since 1969. Faced with the prospect of potential criminal prosecution, the gun club voluntarily agreed to transfer ownership of the marsh and the gun club to the City of Davenport. With the assistance of the Service's Ecological Services Division and the Environmental Protection Agency, this site was authorized as a superfund site - one of only two in the United States ever approved based on ecological concerns. Following a two million dollar cleanup effort in which 250 tons of lead were removed from the underlying soil and sediment, the marsh has been reclaimed and the former shooting range clubhouse has been transformed into an educational and research center for use by local schools and colleges. Nineteen private and public organizations were involved in the overall restoration efforts of the marsh and the grounds.

In January 2000, the Service's Ecological Services Office at East Lansing, Mich., contacted Service agents regarding information that they had received concerning a bulb company which had received a large shipment of aquatic plants from Holland, each of which were found to contain numerous zebra mussels attached to them. The investigation proceeded with the assistance of multiple state and federal agencies. The shipment was traced to the exporter in Holland, and the owners were immediately contacted to determine if other shipments were sent to other locations in the U.S. As part of the overseas investigation, it was determined that USDA officials in Holland were aware of the zebra mussels, but not aware of the dangers involved in their export. The shipment was ultimately abandoned, and overseas officials were made aware of the injurious nature of these mussels, and the U.S. government's policies controlling their import into the U.S. Such importations of non-indigenous species could have been disastrous but for the excellent cooperative efforts of multiple agencies and private parties in this instance.

Environmental Contaminant Investigations

The region has placed a high priority on conducting investigations involving environmental contaminants and the misuse of pesticides due to the large-scale impacts that such activities can have on native wildlife populations.

For example, in October 1999, Service special agents and Illinois Department of Conservation Police Officers responded to a reported large die-off of migratory birds on private lands near



Bird Kill. Thousands of dead birds litter the field of farmer Harvey Puli.

Most of the 27,000 birds poisoned died on the sported where they ingested the poison.

Mascoutah, Ill.. Between Oct. 16-18, 1999 enforcement personnel and biologists collected over 27,000 dead migratory birds from a 13-acre parcel of land. A representative sample of these birds was sent to the Service's Forensic Laboratory where it was determined that the cause of death was carbamate pesticide poisoning resulting from the ingestion of carbofuran, the main ingredient in the product Furadan. Subsequently, a farmer admitted that he had planted a winter wheat crop on this parcel of land, and shortly thereafter, laced additional wheat seed with Furadan, spreading it in four rows throughout the wheat field. The farmer admitted to knowing that Furadan was not approved or permitted to be used as an avicide, or for the application to wheat. The migratory birds killed included 20,094 red-winged blackbirds, 5,970 brown-headed cowbirds, 887 common grackles, and 10 horned larks. The farmer subsequently pled guilty in federal court to two charges: the unlawful and un-permitted taking of 26, 961 migratory birds in violation of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), and the use of a registered pesticide classified for restricted use in a manner inconsistent with its labeling in violation of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). On September 13, 2000, the defendant was sentenced to three years probation and fined \$4,000 for a violation of the MBTA and \$1,000 for violation of FIFRA.

Protecting Migratory Birds



--Photo by George Jameson by permission

Mass Kill. Special agent s investigated a mass killing of 500 double crested cormorants at Little Charity Island, part of Michigan Islands NWR in Lake Huron..

On May 30, 2000, Service biologists conducting a site survey at Little Charity Island on Saginaw Bay, Mich., discovered a massive slaughter of nesting double-crested cormorants. Service agents, Michigan Department of Natural Resources Officers, and Officers from Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge have launched a criminal investigation into the incident, and have estimated that more than 500 nesting cormorants have been killed. This represents about half of the breeding population on the island which is part of the Michigan Islands National Wildlife Refuge. Preliminary findings indicate that the birds were shot at their nesting sites, many while incubating eggs or brooding young. Double-crested cormorants were common in the Great Lakes during the 1950s, but their numbers were devastated by the effects of toxic chemicals in the 1960s. In recent years, however, cormorant populations have increased dramatically due to bans on toxic pesticides such as DDT, federal protection, and abundant food resources. The investigation into this incident is ongoing.

Each winter rare trumpeter swans which are slowly making a comeback from low population levels can be seen in Illinois, and each year the Service and state conservation officials investigate illegal killings of the huge birds. The year 2000 has seen little change from previous years - five trumpeters have fallen victim to shootings. In one incident an individual responsible for killing the bird received nearly a \$1,000 fine in state court. State charges are also pending against shooters at a private club in Fulton County, Illinois, where two swans were killed and one in-

jured. In yet another shooting occurring in Jacksonville, Il, a defendant pled guilty in federal court to shooting a trumpeter swan and was fined \$250.00 ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$500 to a wildlife rehabilitation center, and another \$500 in restitution to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Trumpeter Swan Recovery Program.

A multi-agency investigation involving Environment Canada, Manitoba Natural Resources, and Service special agents concluded Oct. 6, 1999, in Manitoba when 13 American hunters from Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio were charged with 80 hunting related offenses. The investigation centered around illegal hunting in Manitoba involving U.S. hunters and Canadian guides. Service agents documented numerous violations, including: gross over-limits of migratory birds; crippling and failing to retrieve birds; guiding without a valid license; and hunting from boats under power. To date, approximately \$10,000 in fines have been levied, and prosecutions are continuing. Inter-agency and international cooperation of this kind serves to protect a wildlife resource that knows no political boundaries.

In another case, a subject who had 18 state hunting and fishing related investigations, as well as a conviction for the battery of a police officer, was recently sentenced in federal court in Illinois for violating the Migratory Bird Treaty Act in the fall of 1999. As part of a plea agreement, the subject pleaded guilty to exceeding the daily bag limit of waterfowl by shooting 24 blue-wing teal, transportation of improperly identified waterfowl, and possession of lead shot. The subject was fined \$5,000. A companion hunter also entered into a plea agreement and pleaded guilty to exceeding the daily bag limit of waterfowl and transportation of improperly identified waterfowl. He was fined \$2,500.

In a joint investigation by Illinois conservation officers and Service agents, 11 hunters in were observed hunting mourning doves over an area that had been baited with shelled corn, cracked corn, and wheat. Two of the hunters admitted to placing nearly 200 lbs. of corn and wheat on the hunting area prior to the hunt, and provided sworn affidavits stating that the other hunters had knowledge that the bait was present. All of the hunters were charged with baiting related violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. All of the subjects paid their fines totaling \$3,875.

The final defendant in Operation Diver, a 1994 cooperative investigation involving the Service, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Environment Canada, and Manitoba Department of Natural Resources, was concluded. This investigation targeted illegal waterfowl hunting and revealed a multitude of violations including: wanton waste, major over-limits, and guiding without a license. The defendant, a U.S. citizen and one of the illegal outfitters, was fined \$3,000 and ordered to forfeit a deep freeze, 190 ducks, 2,000 shotgun shells, an air boat, a plucking machine, and

over 100 decoys. Ten previous defendants involved in this investigation were fined \$32,846, assessed \$7,000 in Canadian Customs duties, and forfeited weapons and property valued at \$20,000.

International Wildlife Trafficking

On Dec. 1, 1999, an 18- month joint investigation by Service agents and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources culminated with charges being levied against 14 Canadians for 51 offenses relating to the illegal commercialization of black bear parts, including the illegal sale of 83 gall bladders. The illegal operations focused largely on Canadian bear hunting guides who were collecting the gall bladders from bears killed by their clients, many of whom were American hunters. Prosecutions are pending in this investigation.



An individual returning from an argali sheep hunt in China, arrived at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport on Christmas Eve 1998. As the subject was going through U.S. Customs review, a violation alert was noted for him due to previous smuggling activity, and his baggage was subsequently searched and found to contain: two black rhino horns, one argali sheep jaw bone, one set of gazelle horns, and the subject's hunting rifle. Customs requested the assistance of Service Wildlife Inspectors, who interviewed the subject and conducted a computerized search of Service records. The search revealed the subject had a felony criminal history of wildlife violations, including one in which he received a 30 month prison sentence and a \$190,000 fine for smuggling of endangered species.

Service agents were subsequently contacted and the subject was arrested and arraigned in U.S. District Court in Chicago, Dec. 25, 1999. Upon further investigation, the subject has been charged with four counts relating to smuggling of endangered species and the unlawful possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Prosecution is pending in this case.

Endangered and Threatened Species

Cooperative efforts with other federal and state enforcement agencies has resulted in continued and greater protection being afforded to endangered and threatened species through apprehensions and public outreach efforts.

For example, pursuant to an investigation that was initiated in 1998, Service agents and Iowa Conservation Officers executed three search warrants on residences in the Tama, Iowa area as part of an investigation into the illegal killing and commercialization of eagles and their parts for the Native American pow wow trade. Two large suitcases containing leg-hold traps and freshly killed eagle and other raptor parts were seized at one residence. A forensic examination of these wildlife parts revealed that they comprised at least: 22 golden eagles, three bald eagles, 41 Rap-

tors from eight different species, and eight other species of birds. In November 1999, two of the subjects were indicted in federal court on eleven counts of violations of the Eagle Act, and arrest warrants were issued for them. One of the subjects was ultimately arrested while hiding in the attic of a residence in Michigan City, Ind.. On Sept. 22, 2000, this individual was sentenced in federal court to 10 months in prison, ordered to pay \$5,000 in restitution to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and placed on a one year supervised release. The second individual was also eventually arrested, but not prior to being also arrested for drug charges and driving under the influence. In October this individual was sentenced in federal court to 16 months in prison, \$10,000 in restitution to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and placed on two years supervised release. Additionally, forfeiture was ordered for the weapon, suitcases, traps, and all the wildlife parts and feathers. On Sept. 29, 2000, the third individual implicated in this investigation was sentenced in federal court to pay \$5,000 in restitution and placed on two years probation after pleading guilty to illegally taking and possessing a bald eagle. All of the restitution monies are to be used for eagle research projects. While there is a legitimate use for eagle feathers in Native American religious ceremonies, it is this kind of black market trade that severely undermines the conservation efforts of our migratory bird resource.

In another case, on June 23, 2000, a Minnesota subject was sentenced in federal court to a fine of \$9,500 and two years probation for killing two bald eagles. The investigation by Service and Minnesota conservation officers was in response to a anonymous tip implicating the defendant in killing some eagles. The subject ultimately admitted to knowingly killing the eagles for the alleged reason that they were killing ducks that he had been attracting to his yard with feed. After killing the two eagles, the subject burned the carcasses in his wood stove to dispose of them.

Poachers in the region also turned their focus to protected mammals. In early 1999, for example, enforcement officers received reliable information that a large number of grey wolves - 25 to 35 - had been illegally taken over the past couple of years in Northwestern Minnesota. The subjects involved in this organized activity employed the use of snowmobiles to ensnare or run down the wolves to the point of exhaustion, and then shot them. joint investigation with Minnesota Conservation Officers was undertaken, resulting in the recovery of freshly killed wolves and other documentary evidence that culminated in the indictment of the two principal individuals responsible for the killings. These individuals were indicted in federal court for violations of the Endangered Species Act and for possession of a silencer. On April 19, 2000, the defendants pled guilty to one count each of illegally taking a gray wolf. One defendant received a sentence of 8 days home confinement, a \$3,500 fine, probation for five years with no hunting or trapping allowed during the first two years, and 50

hours of community service with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals or the Humane Society. The second defendant received a fine of \$2,500 and probation for five years with no hunting or trapping for the first one year. Subsequent to this investigation, a hotline was established to enable anonymous callers to report any information concerning the shooting or killing of wolves.

In September 1999 an individual shot and killed a gray wolf in Carlton County, Minn.. At the time of the shooting, the individual stated that he knew that the animal was a wolf and that it was protected under the Endangered Species Act. This subject was issued a Notice of Violation for the unlawful killing of a gray wolf, and on Nov. 25, 1999, the individual paid a \$1,500 fine.

On Mar. 14, 2000, an investigation into the unlawful sales of endangered species in interstate commerce was concluded with the payment of a \$1,000 fine by a subject for unlawfully selling a tiger in interstate commerce.

Teaming With Science to Safeguard Wildlife

In the evening hours of Oct. 29, 1996, a Wisconsin man with 27 prior wildlife convictions and revoked hunting privileges used a spotlight and a .22 caliber rifle to kill a trophy whitetail buck during the bow hunting season. Early the next morning, he transported the buck to Michigan, purchased a nonresident hunting license, proceeded to stage the "hunting" of the deer on videotape, registered the deer in Michigan, and then returned to Wisconsin with his "Michigan"deer. Based on information from a cooperating individual, a joint investigation was initiated by Wisconsin Conservation Wardens and Service agents.

In spite of securing evidence through witness statements, execution of search warrants, and convening a federal grand jury, the subject steadfastly denied any wrongdoing. The officers continued to search for a way to improve the evidence and corroboration in the case, and turned to the capabilities of the Geology and Geophysics Department at the University of Wisconsin. A University scientist used an analysis of the strontium isotope content of a deer's antlers to establish a geographic fingerprint of the region where the animal lived. Tests performed by the geologist proved that the subject's deer was identical with deer living in the Portage, Wis., area and conclusively proved that the deer did not come from Michigan. When faced with this evidence, the subject pleaded guilty. He was sentenced to 30 days imprisonment, fined \$2,000 given five years probation during which time he is prohibited from hunting or fishing. He was further ordered to perform 1,000 hours of community service in the field of resource and wildlife management. The importance of this conviction goes beyond the sentencing and deterrent effects of the conviction, and extends to the long lasting benefit of protecting wildlife through the establishment of a new scientific technique - a technique which allows the geographic fingerprinting of an animal

through strontium isotope analysis.

Safeguarding National Wildlife Refuges

In August 1999, a radio station in the Davenport, Iowa area organized an advertizing event at the Princeton Beach area of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge in Scott County, Iowa, without requesting authorization for such activities. The event attracted several hundred boaters on the remote beach, and ended up with unruly crowds strewing refuse, debris, and uncollected trash on the beach. The refuge manager and Service agents pursued this matter in the federal court system, and the radio station was charged with a one count violation involving littering on the refuge. On June 6, 2000,, the station pled guilty to the violation and as part of a plea agreement, was sentenced to pay a \$200 criminal fine; make restitution to the refuge in the amount of \$9,800; and ordered to broadcast ten 30-second public service announcements dealing with environmental issues affecting the Upper Mississippi National Wildlife Refuge.

93 Month Jail Sentence Imposed for Witness Retaliation

On Nov. 22, 1999, in U.S. District Court in Illinois a subject, initially convicted for the illegal take and sale of freshwater mussels, received a 93 month jail sentence for violation of the Federal Witness Retaliation Statute for assaulting a witness who had testified against him. Part of the sentence will run concurrently with the subject's initial sentence of 31 months in prison that related to the poaching and illegal sale of mussels. At the time of the original sentencing, the subject also was ordered to pay \$28,839 in restitution to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. On Oct. 13, 2000, the defendant appealed his conviction relating to the charge of witness retaliation, but the appellate court upheld the lower court's decision.

Border Port Inspection Activities

On Oct. 4, 1999, a Chinese passenger was stopped at the security checkpoint upon his arrival in Detroit Metropolitan Airport from Beijing, China. The passenger was found to have four vials of a bear gall bladder product in his possession. During the interview, conducted through an interpreter, the passenger stated he had given six vials of the same product to a Chinese flight attendant on board the flight. The transfer took place after the attendant advised the individual that it was illegal to import bear gall, but that it was also very valuable in the U.S. The attendant was identified, but denied having any conversations with the passenger or taking anything from a passenger, a violation of airline rules. A subsequent investigation revealed that the attendant did acquire six vials of bear gall product from the passenger, and that the product was consistent with Asiatic Black Bear, an Appendix I listed species. The attendant ultimately paid a \$1,500 fine for submitting false documents and accounts, and unlawfully importing wildlife into the United States.

Twin Cities Inspection Activities

The Minneapolis/St. Paul International airport has become a gateway for hunters returning from Canada, particularly Saskatchewan which has experienced dramatic increases in both waterfowl and big game hunters in recent years. During the 1999 Saskatchewan big game season, "Operation Distant Check" was implemented at the Minneapolis/St. Paul airport. This operation involved Service Agents and Wildlife Inspectors, and Saskatchewan Conservation Officers who as a team conducted interviews and inspections with hunters returning to the U.S. from Canada. In addition to the outreach efforts that were achieved, 22 individuals were cited in federal court for violations including failure to declare wildlife, overlimits of wildlife, and other Lacey Act violations. To date, over \$18,500 in fines have been collected for these violations. Additionally, Saskatchewan Officers were able to interview returning U.S. hunters and identify Canadian violations involving Canadian guides, outfitters, and residents. Numerous violations occurring in Canada were documented, and will be followed up in the Canadian court system.

Service Inspectors and Special Agents in Chicago team up to combat illegal wildlife trade at the Region's only designated port. Violation notices issued during the past year brought over \$15,000 in fines for unlawful imports and exports of wildlife.

A shipment of venomous reptiles imported from Indonesia in violation of IATA (International Air Transport Association) requirements of the CITES permit, included taipan, spitting and king cobras, and a viper that had escaped from its enclosure. The importer was planning to remove the dangerous reptiles from their shipping crate and transport them to Wisconsin secured only by their cloth bags. The airline was heavily fined for the violation, and the importer abandoned the inhumanely shipped animals.

Chicago Inspection Activities

Several years ago, a Chicago area lawyer imported in his accompanying baggage from Cameroon, two Olive Ridley sea turtle shells, six hinge-back tortoise shells, two elephant ivory carvings, eight pair of elephant ivory ear rings, nine monitor lizard skin wallets, and nine elephant ivory walking canes. Not only had the importer failed to declare the wildlife on his customs form, but after the first few items were discovered, the importer denied having additional items and claimed that they were for personal use only. The items were seized and abandoned, but further investigation revealed the wildlife articles were intended to be sold at a relative's store. The importer moved from the Chicago area before criminal charges were filed, but he was located last year living in Atlanta, Ga.. He was interviewed and issued violation notices totaling over \$4,600. After the fines were paid, several of the wildlife items were donated during African-American history month to DuSable Museum of African-American History in Chicago.

The Wildlife Inspectors at O'Hare International Airport are actively involved in outreach activities. U.S. Customs passenger service representatives schedule an average of 10 tours each month at the international facility. The tours average 20-30 people per group. Presentations provided by the Wildlife Inspectors are well received and considered the most interesting. Participation in these tours provides an opportunity to provide wildlife educational outreach to thousands of international travelers each year.

A three month exhibit on the Service's Wildlife Inspector program was featured at the Lizzardo Museum this year. The exhibit received considerable press in local newspapers and community calendars. Wildlife Inspectors gave a special presentation to interested museum goers.

In addition to the programs conducted at the airport, the Chicago Wildlife Inspectors have provided outreach in the nearby community to a number of different groups. In addition to local school, scouting and college groups they participated in special outreach programs such as Gang Resistance Education and Career Awareness, Take Your Child to Work Day, and job shadowing in the Expanding Horizons program.

Assisting Service Regions

This year saw a record number of requests for assistance from other Service enforcement regions and foreign governments. Requested assistance included executing search and seizure warrants, interviewing witnesses and suspects, and working in cooperative investigations. These joint efforts exemplify the effectiveness of enforcement groups working together to combat wild-life crime, which is increasingly becoming national and global in scope.

Training State and Federal Agencies

Regional agents are involved in a wide range of training activities - sharing their expertise and providing outreach efforts to other Service programs, and other state and federal organizations. For example, the Service agent in Iowa again provided instruction at the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy in courses ranging from the history, structure, and organization of the Service to the various statutes enforced by Service enforcement personnel. To date, he has taught more than 1,520 new law enforcement officers since this program began.

In October 1999 an overview of the region's three year freshwater clam investigation was presented to about 40 state and federal wildlife biologists at the region's Annual Endangered Species Coordinator's meeting.

In November, 1999, Service agents presented two days of train-

ing to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources recruit training class for Conservation Police Officers. Topics included: federal court procedures, sentencing guidelines, environmental investigations, and federal laws. Similar presentations were made this past year at the Missouri Department of Conservation

In addition to the subject matter training described above, weapon handling and training has been provided to the Division of Refuges as well as to a number of state agencies. This training also included instructor training in the form of non-lethal firearms training and techniques.

Cooperative State-Federal Enforcement Actions

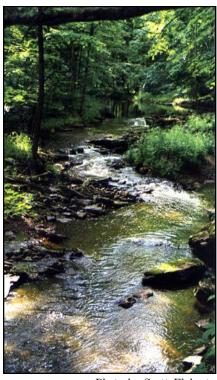
On a number of occasions Service agents provided assistance to enforcement task force activities engaged in by the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Missouri Highway Patrol. During two of these operations, the following violations were documented: 47 wildlife violations and 17 non-wildlife violations.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001

During Fiscal Year 2001, the Law Enforcement Program will:

- --Continue documenting violations which have the most significant impact on the wildlife resource, such as wild populations of federally protected species, and species protected by state of foriegn laws, where there is an emphasis on unlawful commercial exploitation and/or habitat destruction or modification.
- --Aggressively prosecute individuals, groups and criminal enterprises associated with such violations.
- --Continue promoting and encouraging voluntary compliance with federal wildlife laws through public educational and awareness efforts, and create a deterrent effect through successful prosecutions and outreach efforts.

Fiscal Year 2000 Annual Report Region 3



--Photo by Scott Flaherty

New Refuge. Otter Creek winds its

way through Big Oaks NWR in

southern Indiana. The 50,000 acre

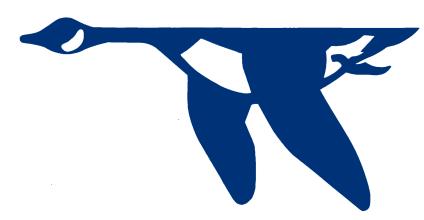
Refuge, built on the former Jefferson

Proving Ground, was dedicated in

July 2000.

Program Description and Mission

The National Wildlife Refuge System is responsible for the acquisition and management of lands within the National Wildlife Refuge System for the purpose of assuring the perpetuation of wildlife populations for the American public. Additionally, work is done with private landowners and organizations to enhance wildlife populations on private lands. Region 3 manages 56 National Wildlife Refuges and Wetland Management Districts across eight states in the Midwest.



The blue goose, designed by J.N.
"Ding" Darling, has become the
symbol of the National Wildlife
Refuge System

National Wildlife Refuges and Waterfowl Production Areas in Region 3 were host to over 7.6 million visitors during Fiscal Year 2000.

Summary of Fiscal Year 2000 Accomplishments

Wildlife Habitat Improvements



--Photo by Brian Pember Planting Trees. Friends Group member Jim Eddy and Ranger Cindy Samples work with students planting trees during Arbor Day activities at Upper Mississippi River NW&FR.

During Fiscal Year 2000, refuge managers restored 3,900 acres of wetlands, 6,300 acres of grasslands, and 12 miles of rivers. They managed and improved habitat on 120,000 acres of managed wetlands, and 10,000 acres of moist soil units. In addition, we safely and successfully conducted prescribed burning on 57,000 acres of grass and forest lands on refuges throughout the region.

A Region 3 Strategic Fire Plan was developed by a regional and field workgroup; many of its recommendations, including the adoption of the FireBase workload analysis tool, are being immediately implemented.

Invasive species were controlled on 19,000 acres of habitat, but is still needed on over 102,000 acres of refuge habitat.

Refuge biologists conducted 477 wildlife and 179 habitat surveys during the year, and coordinated 165 formal research studies that will lead to greater understanding of fish and wildlife needs on refuges.

Refuge Resource Protection

Refuge staff participated in 39 environmental cleanup activities, including responses to two chemical spills on refuge lands. Water quality studies are underway on nine refuges, and air quality studies are being conducted on two refuges.

Over 40 cultural resource investigations were conducted, leading to greater understanding of human activities on the land. Refuges are responsible for the care and maintenance of over 201,000 objects of cultural and historical significance.

Refuge law enforcement activities included the investigation of 3,700 incidents, and resulted in the issuance of 706 Notice of Violations for federal violations, and assisted with 293 cases of state fish and wildlife violations occurring on refuge lands.

A total of 61 refuge staff assisted with combating wildfires in western and southeastern states. In addition, refuge staff helped fight 67 wildfires that occurred near or on refuges within the region.

Refuge staff assisted 2,583 private landowners with habitat improvements, and coordinated with Native American tribes with habitat improvements on 2,322 acres of Tribal lands.

Visitor Services and Outreach

National Wildlife Refuges and Waterfowl Production Areas in Region 3 were host to over 7.6 million visitors during 2000. Of this total, over 2 million people participated in either hunting or fishing, and over 4 million people visited primarily to observe and learn about fish and wildlife. Over 82,000 youth participated in

Visitor Services and Outreach (continued)

formal environmental education programs on refuges, and over 2,000 teachers participated in teacher workshops hosted by refuge staff and volunteers to learn about how to make best use of refuge lands for outdoor classroom activities.



--USFWS Photo **Service to Visitors.** Darla Wenger of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge helps a senior get setup on a accessible fishing dock on the Refuge.

To improve the quality of visitor services, new interpretive signs and interactive exhibits were installed at Seney, Upper Mississippi, Minnesota Valley, and Trempealeau Refuges. New brochures were developed for six national wildlife refuges.

During 2000, over 5,000 individuals volunteered their time and energy to work on refuges in Region 3. A sampling of their activities include: leading school children in outdoor classroom lessons, teaching hunter safety classes, assisting with fishing day activities, maintaining and repairing hiking trails, and helping out in offices. These valued members of our staffs contributed over 170,000 hours of time working along side refuge staff.

Refuge staff issued 833 news releases, and were seen or heard in 387 radio or television news stories throughout the year. Over 280 special public events were conducted on refuges throughout the region during the year.

A regional conference on Human Dimensions of natural resource management was jointly hosted by the Region, the University of Minnesota, and the U.S. Geological Survey, leading to further research efforts evaluating the social and economic impacts and benefits of waterfowl production areas to rural Minnesota.

Partners for Wildlife

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW) program posted record accomplishments in the restoration of habitats for trust resources in Fiscal Year 2000. The PFW technical assistance and habitat restoration components, together with the Clean Water Action Plan and Fish Habitat Restoration components, combined to restore over 1,900 wetlands totaling 9,200 acres. Native prairie was established on 436 sites and totaled 4,200 acres. Twenty-nine miles of riparian habitat was restored and twenty-four miles of in-stream habitat was restored or enhanced for trust species. Thirty barriers to fish passage were removed. Technical assistance was provided to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the enrollment of 15,000 acres of land into the Wetlands Reserve Program. An additional 800 consultations with USDA program participants was provided by PFW.

More than 300
partners contributed \$4.7 million
in cash and inkind services to
Partners for Fish
and Wildlife
projects.

PFW worked with over 800 landowners in Fiscal Year 2000. There were 138 formal partnerships with non-governmental organizations, conservation groups, foundations, etc. entered into to accomplish restoration objectives. Over 300 partners contributed \$4.7 million in cash and in-kind services to the PFW projects. There are an estimated 400 landowners who are

already requesting PFW assistance in restoring wildlife habitat in the coming year.

Refuge Planning



National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance work was completed for additions to Upper Mississippi NW&FR, Big Muddy NF&WR, and Minnesota Valley NWR. NEPA compliance documents for two proposed national wildlife refuges were prepared and released for public review. This included an environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed Aldo Leopold NWR in Wisconsin and an EA and an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed Little Darby NWR in Ohio. Public review drafts of Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) and their associated EAs were released for Necedah NWR, DeSoto NWR, and Ottawa NWR. The Ottawa CCP and EA was finalized before the end of the Fiscal year. At Fiscal Year's end, there were 14 CCPs in progress. Preliminary project proposals (PPP) were submitted to the Washington Office for approval to begin planning for possible additions to Wyandotte NWR in Michigan and Minnesota Valley NWR in Minnesota, as well as for the potential establishment of Glacial Ridge NWR in Minnesota. An EA tiering off a Department of Army EIS for the disposal of the former Jefferson Proving Grounds was completed along with a management agreement with Army that resulted in the establishment of the 50,000 acre Big Oaks NWR in Indiana.

Realty



--Photo by James R. Fisher

Refuge Talk. Regional Director Bill Hartwig (sun glasses) joins Service Director Jamie Rappaport Clark and Refuge Manager Lee Herzberger in a discussion of Big Oaks NWR with Congressman Baron Hill.

In the Waterfowl Production Program in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, the Division of Realty completed 109 transactions which protected 4,129 acres in fee acquisitions, 2,933 acres of wetland easements, and 1,752 acres of grassland easements. The total cost of these acquisition efforts was \$8,309,000, using the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. In addition to this total, 3 tracts covering 56 acres were acquired at a total cost of \$94,950, using North American Wetland Conservation Act funds. The Division of Realty completed a total of 12 transactions at 10 projects that resulted in the protection of 850 acres at a total cost of \$2,488,000 from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Using \$474,000 of flood monies, the Division of Realty acquired an additional 470 acres in three transactions at one project.

The Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge (Indiana) was added to the system during the year with the completion of a lease agreement and memorandum of understanding with the Department of the Army. This new refuge includes approximately 50,000 acres of the former Jefferson Proving Ground, and contains extensive hardwood forests and grasslands.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2001

- Aggressively implement "Fulfilling the Promise" for the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- Strengthen effective Migratory Bird Fund and Land and Water Conservation Fund planning, budget development, and execution through establishment of a Realty/Refuge Management Workgroup and by implementing workgroup recommendations.
- Implement Minimum Public Use Standards for all National Wildlife Refuges and Wetland Management Districts.
- Complete a Refuge Law Enforcement Program review and implement recommendations.
- Work with all Project Leaders to ensure that Refuge Staff receive career and professional development as a high priority.



--Photo by Chuck Traxler

Hunting opportunities for all. Special hunting periods for hunters with disabilities are held at numerous Refuges in Region 3. The hunter above bagged his deer at Rydell NWR in northwest Minnesota.

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Equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from programs and activities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is available to all individuals regardless of physical or mental disability. For information please contact the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office for Equal Opportunity, 1849 C Street N.W., Washington, DC 20240. Federal Relay Number: 1-800-877-8339 TDD/TTY Available in alternative formats upon request.





Wildlife observation deck at Mingo NWR, Puxico, Missouri